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THAT HITLER HAS AGAIN lost the opportunity to head a German coalition Cabinet offered to him by President von Hindenburg is excellent news. His wavering, his vacillation, and his failure to take this chance to become Chancellor must certainly hurt him further with his followers. He has persistently boasted that he was his party, on one occasion saying: "My will is law for the party, and with the possible exception of Russia and Italy there is no political organization anywhere which is so completely answerable to its leader." Yet when confronted by the offer made by Hindenburg this bold dictator, instead of deciding immediately for himself and his party, spent day after day consulting with this associate and that deputy, only to conclude that, after all, the conditions laid down by Hindenburg were too onerous. No Napoleon here—just a confused and weak demagogue in the process of being deflated. He now declares that he will be Chancellor within four months. Perhaps. But he has told his army of their impending victory so often that this need alarm no one. Meanwhile, the indications are that the octogenarian President will now authorize another Presidential Cabinet and Chancellor to hold on during a "winter vacation." That is not to be welcomed, for it is after all but a dictatorship thinly veiled. None the less, it seems to us much to be preferred to giving the chancellorship to Hitler.

THE TREATY OF NON-AGGRESSION which has just been concluded between France and Soviet Russia constitutes without question a major contribution to the peace of Europe. Russia first proposed the pact in 1928, but the final agreement was delayed until now because of the complexity of the political and diplomatic problems involved. Disputes between the two countries are to be settled only by peaceful means, each signatory agreeing that under no circumstances will it resort to arms against the other either singly or in concert with other Powers. Each country also promises to refrain from all activity designed or tending to promote propaganda against the political or social institutions of the other. The fourth article of the treaty is directed against economic embargoes or blockades such as the Allies resorted to after the 1917 revolution. The treaty represents an important victory for Russia. Similar agreements have been signed with Poland, Finland, Esthonia, and Latvia. It may now definitely be hoped that Rumania will decide to follow France's lead. In that event Russia will have reason to feel genuinely secure on its western frontiers. But the treaty is also of great importance for France. The Communist press can no longer sincerely accuse France of seeking to head a new war of intervention against Soviet Russia. Moreover, whether or not Rumania enters into a similar arrangement with Moscow, France need not now have any real fear of being dragged into a war arising from local disputes between any of its eastern allies and Russia.

THE MILITARISTS OF JAPAN seem determined to drive that country into bankruptcy. They have forced upon the government the largest budget in Japan's history. "Swollen by the extraordinary demands of the army and the navy, chiefly in connection with Manchuria," to quote the Associated Press, the expenditures planned for the next fiscal year total $447,800,000. But this tells only half the tale. The budget provides for revenues estimated at only $268,400,000. The prospective deficit will be met, or so the Cabinet hopes, by floating new bond issues. Japan will simply be courting disaster if it insists on increasing its already tremendous national debt. The present low value of the yen shows what immense financial difficulties Japan is facing even without this added burden. Incidentally, the fall of the yen began with the occupation of Manchuria. It is today being quoted at 20 cents, or approximately 40 per cent of its par value. The bankers, business men, and newspapers have been virtually unanimous in warning the militarists against increasing the military items in the budget. The president of the Japan Chamber of Commerce asserted that the present policy was leading the country toward currency inflation and economic collapse. But the army and navy leaders have paid not the slightest heed to these warnings.

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ANDREW W. MELLON expressed himself in a Thanksgiving Day speech in London as being thankful that despite the hard times there had been no "violence and upheaval" in this country. He said that the people of the United States had "weathered the storm remarkably well." On the same day several hundred thousand destitute people in New York City also gave thanks, but of another kind. The charitable organizations had made a special effort to see that every needy person in the city was given a holiday meal. On that day at least the destitute unemployed did not have to go hungry. It is true that there has been no great or violent social upheaval in the United States. Nevertheless, there has been considerable violence. Only recently Minneapolis and Cleveland witnessed serious hunger riots on the same day, and similar disturbances have taken place within the last few months in Chicago, St. Louis, and elsewhere. There is perhaps no suggestion of a dramatic upheaval in the increase in malnutrition among school children, but it can hardly be doubted that notwithstanding its lack of dramatic quality this factor constitutes a real menace to our social structure. Since 1930 the number of cases of malnutrition in the New York City schools has increased more than 33 per cent. "We know," said Dr. S. W. Wynne, the Commissioner of Health, "that most, if not all, of the increase in malnutrition since 1929 is due to actual poverty." Hunger riots on the one hand and undernourishment on the other will continue to take their unnecessary toll until adequate relief is provided for the unemployed.

THAT ADMIRABLE PERSON, General Pelham D. Glassford, has announced that henceforth he will devote his brilliant abilities to going to the rescue of the homeless, workless army of boys now wandering over the United States, certain to become a menace to themselves and to peace and order. He estimates their number at no less than one million and it will surely increase if the depression continues. One million? Why, that is exactly the number of those boys who only five or six years ago were running wild in Soviet Russia. Our newspapers were then full of articles about them, asserting that their existence was beyond doubt complete proof of the madness and wickedness and horrible inefficiency of the whole Soviet experiment. Presto, change! Everybody now admits that the wild boys of Russia exist no more. They have been gathered up, and placed in institutions or put to work. Today it is the great and prosperous United States, so vastly superior, as Herbert Hoover has constantly reminded us, to all the rest of the world in the perfection of its capitalist system, which has a million boys roving from town to village to city to hamlet. It is, indeed, a situation to warrant the greatest concern lest this army of uneducated and ill-nourished youth swell the ranks of gangsters and criminals of all kind. General Glassford has found a task worthy of his abilities. We wish him all success in it.

THE FARMERS ARE TRYING by various means to call the attention of the country to their grave plight. The "farm holiday" program having failed, as it was bound to, some are now marching upon Washington to demand that Congress help them. A more arresting picture of their difficulties is presented in the statistical reports now being published by the Department of Agriculture. These show that the total gross income from agriculture fell from $11,950,000,000 in 1929 to $5,240,000,000 in 1932, a decrease of approximately 56 per cent. The reduction in net income was proportionately greater, for the fixed charges the farmer must meet remained virtually unchanged, the only important exception being noted in the rent paid by tenant farmers. Estimates of farm expenditures in 1932 are not yet available, but farm expenses in the period from 1929 to 1931 fell only $1,810,000,000, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, while gross income decreased $4,995,000,000 in the same period. After meeting all his operating expenses, including taxes and interest, the average farmer in 1929 had $847 available to pay for his own hire, to buy new equipment, to cover depreciation charges and the interest on his investment, and to buy clothing and other necessities for himself and his family; in 1931 he had only $342 available for these purposes. This year the margin will be much smaller.

THOUSANDS OF ALIENS have lately been deported to their native lands only because they have in one way or another expressed their dissatisfaction with existing economic conditions. The courts, as in the case of Nels C. Kjar, a resident of Chicago who was recently sent back to Denmark, have aided the immigration authorities in ridding the country of these "undesirable aliens" by misinterpreting or ignoring the Constitution. In the Kjar case the federal court drew a very neat distinction when it declared that because he is an alien, Kjar "has not the right of revolution against the United States." Presumably that right is reserved for bona fide citizens. Nels Kjar is, of course, a member of the Communist Party, but he was deported primarily because of his activity in urging the unemployed to demand more adequate relief. That this was the real reason is also suggested by the intensive efforts of the immigration authorities in Chicago and elsewhere to obtain the names of all aliens receiving relief. The relief agencies in Illinois cannot legally divulge these names, but State Senator Barbour has promised to help by seeking modification of the law. "I shudder to think," he said, "what will become of us if we have to feed and house all these people for another fall and winter after this one, and if some of them can be taken back to their homelands, the county authorities owe a duty to the taxpayers to see that it is done." Misguided nationalism could go no farther than this.

JUST AS THE CASE was going to trial, the government suit against the members of the great radio-patent combination was settled by the companies' agreeing to a decree being entered, without, however, admitting the truth of the government's allegations, and with the government conceding that the decree would not be considered as proof that the companies had violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. This is the most decisive step taken in enforcing the law since the packers' decree in 1920 and the breaking up of the original Standard Oil Company in 1911. This outcome is the more interesting because it was precisely ten years ago that Harry M. Daugherty, then the Attorney-General, gave to this combination a "letter of immunity." Not until Senator Couzens brought about an investigation of the trust by the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee was the Department of Justice moved to act. Set up in 1922, the combination undertook in the spring of 1927 to exact a patent royalty of

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7½ per cent of his gross receipts from every radio manufacturer, who in addition was compelled to buy all his tubes from the trust and pay a minimum annual royalty of $100,000. This meant that a manufacturer with a business of less than $1,250,000 was automatically debarred from the radio business. To combat this intolerable situation the Radio Protective Association was formed and fought the case through.

HERE IS A SMALL post-election story that seems to us to conceal a rather large charge of political dynamite: Toward the end of October a country school in Connecticut inserted an advertisement for domestic help in the daily newspaper of a nearby industrial town. The school, like other schools, is hard pressed for funds; the wages offered were at depression levels. The newspaper appeared on the streets of the nearby town at five o'clock in the afternoon; and at 5:01 an application for one of the jobs was received over the school telephone. By ten o'clock the same night sixty-five applicants had telephoned, eager to do the work at the wages offered. Several weeks passed. Election day came and went. One or two of the workers hired through the original advertisement proved to be unsatisfactory and the names and addresses of the rejected applicants were dug out of the school files. One by one these unemployed domestic workers were called up and asked if they still wanted work. Every one made the same answer, which was to this effect if not in these exact words: "No, I haven't got another job. Sure I want work. But I won't work for the wages you offered. Not since election. Things are going to be different now and wages are going to go up." The school is still short of funds; it is also short of help and is likely to remain so. For the workers in that particular town are sitting tight waiting for Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic Party to raise their wages.

WHEN THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS, convicted of assault, were given another chance by the decision of the United States Supreme Court, *The Nation* welcomed the verdict as offering the opportunity of "a new trial under different circumstances from those surrounding the original one, when an atmosphere of hostility and race prejudice made a fair trial impossible." For this position we are attacked by a representative of the International Labor Defense, who asserts in another column of this issue that our statement serves as an "objective aid to the legal lynchers" and that the Supreme Court decision "becomes a set of instructions to the lower courts on how legally to lynch the Scottsboro boys . . . without violating the Constitution." This seems to us violent nonsense. We believe now, as we did when the decision was first announced, that the Supreme Court reversal will act as a check on the lower courts and tend to minimize the effects of mob feeling when the case comes up for retrial. The editorial referred to was written before the grounds for reversal had been published. For this reason we made no mention of the failure of the court to deal with any of the claims put forward in the appeal except the single one of denial of counsel. This evasion by the court of two fundamental points—that the trial was unfair and that qualified Negroes were excluded from the jury—is attacked by Morris L. Ernst in his "Dissenting Opinion" on page 559 of this issue; and we support his objections without, however, accepting his conclusion that as a result the reversal was merely "an empty, meaningless victory." After all, the right to present an adequate defense—to be represented by counsel and to have an opportunity to prepare for trial—is equally fundamental, not a mere technicality, and is for the first time definitely established in our constitutional law by the Supreme Court's decision.

THE COMING RETIREMENT of President Lowell, long expected, marks the end of a service in his office of twenty-three years. If it cannot be said to compare in achievement with that of President Eliot, it will be remembered for Mr. Lowell's commitment of Harvard to the "house" plan and for his magnificent stand for free speech and academic freedom. Many of his mistakes are mitigated by this championship of what is by all odds the most important matter in university life. If one shudders at the horrible superficiality, inefficiency, and falsity of Mr. Lowell's report on the Sacco-Vanzetti case, one must none the less remember with gratitude that he stood by Professor Münsterberg during the insanity of the World War, and later protected Harold Laski from those conservatives and reactionaries who demanded that he be ousted because he sided with the Boston police in their famous strike, which had such a notable and unearned effect upon the career of Calvin Coolidge. To President Lowell the group of liberal professors in the Harvard Law School is also deeply indebted. Other college presidents would have found it hard to be patient if a single professor's presence in a school had lost it the thousands of dollars which Felix Frankfurter's continuance in the Law School cost Harvard during its endowment campaign. While other college heads prated about *Lehrfreiheit* and then, like Nicholas Murray Butler, drove men out in war time who dared to stick by their faiths, President Lowell practiced what he preached.

RARELY DOES A STATE have so modest, so devoted, and so useful a citizen as Massachusetts had for many years in the late Dr. Henry P. Walcott. Twice acting-president of Harvard, of which he was the oldest alumnus at his death, he was for twenty-seven years an able member of its upper governing body, the Fellows, and one of President Eliot's warmest and ablest supporters. But his activities were never restricted to his university, or to the Massachusetts General Hospital, of which, as chairman of its Board of Trustees, he was for a long period the guiding spirit. Beyond that he gave years to the Massachusetts State Board of Health and the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board. Indeed, he was prominent in every movement intended to promote the public health. For fifty years he wrote portions of the annual reports of the State Board of Health of Massachusetts. In 1912 he presided over the fifteenth International Congress on Hygiene and Demography, held in Washington. Men of this type are to be found in the United States not in decreasing but increasing numbers—though none finer than Dr. Walcott. The trouble is that their work, being quietly constructive and the reverse of spectacular, rarely finds recognition in print. We have in mind especially the battalions of self-sacrificing scientists in the employ of the federal government who perform most valuable service, sometimes better recognized and understood abroad than at home—often for beggarly pay.

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Know-Nothingism Wins

TO all those who have been hoping for a genuine emergence from the world's economic crisis, the official American reply to the French and British requests for reconsideration of the war debts must come as a profound disappointment. Legalistic and technical considerations have been allowed to triumph over the most serious economic and political realities.

The official notes signed by Secretary Stimson follow closely the statement previously made public by the President, but the latter is the more detailed. In it the President made six numbered "points." The first is that the debts were created with the assumption on both sides that they were "actual loans which would be repaid." This is true; but our debtors have never attempted to deny it. The second is that "the United States Government from the beginning has taken the position that it would deal with each of the debtor governments separately." This raises a question that is in some respects merely technical, for while it is true that the "capacity to pay" of each debtor may be different from that of the others, the capacity of all of them is determined by the same general factors—the world-wide fall of commodity prices, the shrinkage in foreign trade, and the end of German reparations payments.

Mr. Hoover's third point acknowledges that all debt settlements must take into consideration "the capacity to pay of the individual debtor nation." It is a gain to have the President reiterate this. If nothing else were acknowledged we should be obliged to admit that the capacity to pay of our debtors is now on the average less than two-thirds of what it was in the period from 1923 to 1926, when the present settlements were arrived at. But that capacity merely sets an upper limit. Vastly more important than this is the question of world economic stability—the effects of these transfers on both international good-will and international trade. Unfortunately, neither in Mr. Hoover's memorandum nor in the official American notes do these basic considerations receive any notice.

The fourth point in Mr. Hoover's memorandum is that the debts "must be treated as entirely separate from the reparations claims." Mr. Roosevelt, in his statement, puts this even more emphatically when he declares that "the indebtedness of the various European nations to our government has no relation whatsoever to reparations payments made or owed to them." Few statements could be farther from the truth. Whatever may be said regarding the legal or moral relationship of debts and reparations, there can be no question regarding the psychological, the historic, the political, and above all the economic relationship between them. The United States Government itself made a de facto acknowledgment of this relationship in the Hoover moratorium. Psychologically and politically, France can hardly be expected to ratify the Lausanne agreement, reducing German reparations to a comparatively negligible sum, while we refuse to reduce France's indebtedness to us by a penny. Economically, the virtual cessation of German reparations profoundly affects the French and British capacity to pay, partly because it affects their total resources of payment, but more because it makes it necessary for each of them to create an export surplus which they did not previously have to create.

When Mr. Hoover goes on to assert that any further debt concession "would result in the inevitable transfer of a tax burden from the taxpayers of some other country to the taxpayers in our own without the possibility of any compensating set-off," he entirely ignores the enormous "set-off" that would be sure to come if the debt-and-reparations problem which has weighed upon the world in the last decade were removed. Those who do not think this set-off would be important should recall the instant rise in the markets of the world when the Hoover moratorium was announced, and the astonishing recovery in our own markets after the Lausanne agreement was reached.

Mr. Hoover's fifth point, upon which even greater insistence is laid in the official American reply, is that the debt agreements are "unalterable save by Congressional action." If our debtors were still in doubt upon this point, it might be proper to remind them of it, but the need for Congressional ratification in no way reduces the President's own responsibility. Rather, it increases it. It would be ignominious for a President to attempt to hide behind Congress's skirts in a question of this kind. He, not Congress, is charged with the initiative in foreign affairs. It is his duty to state plainly what action he himself believes our government should take. It is his duty to state this even if he feels that not a single member of Congress will agree with him. Congressional opposition merely increases his obligation to put his recommendations in their most persuasive and urgent form.

In his sixth point, however, Mr. Hoover does state his own views. He is opposed to any postponement of the December 15 payments; he wants "tangible compensation" in the form of "expansion of markets for products of American agriculture and labor" in return for any reduction of debt; and he favors the revival of an agency to examine the subject. In the first we fear he is merely yielding to Congressional opinion. If his second proposal were carried out it would simply create a new debt problem for the future. The third proposal is sound. Mr. Roosevelt believes that such an agency is unnecessary, and that foreign governments may deal with us through diplomatic channels. This overlooks the great complexity of the problems, and the weight that the recommendations of a body of experts would carry with Congress. Mr. Roosevelt is to be praised for his receptive attitude toward debt negotiations, but his reiteration that the responsibility "rests upon those now vested with executive and legislative authority" is not reassuring. That the legal and official responsibility rests with the present Administration we do not need to be told; but as President-elect, Mr. Roosevelt has an inescapable moral responsibility to state with the fullest force and candor his views on what should now be done. Thus far the attitude both of President Hoover and of Governor Roosevelt reveals an evasion of responsibility and of leadership that must arouse the deepest concern.

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Our Lying Press

SOME sensitive Englishmen have been wincing at something besides our attitude on the international debts. Speaking at a luncheon given by the Pilgrims in London, Viscount Hailsham called attention to the fraudulent character of some of the recent news in our sensational press. He cited especially the pictures reprinted from the New York *Daily Mirror* in the London *Daily Express,* one of which represented the recent hunger marchers in London storming Buckingham Palace. Said Lord Hailsham:

> These pictures were taken not in 1932, but in 1929; and instead of representing riots and mobs clamoring to be admitted to make protests to their sovereign, they in fact represented the anxiety of thousands of Britishers when the health of a King was endangered whose strongest throne lies in the affections of his subjects.

The New York *Times* dispatch, from which we take the above, adds that "London papers have reflected the indignation of the British public over headlines in American newspapers during demonstrations of the unemployed. One headline from a Chicago newspaper reading 'London Mob Riots at Palace,' was reproduced as a libel on England inasmuch as the demonstrations were confined to Trafalgar Square, three-quarters of a mile away."

Viscount Hailsham has come into contact with one of the prerogatives of a certain portion of our press—the tabloids. Ever since their appearance they have deemed it entirely within their province to print pictures taken at any time, at any place, and to bring them up to date by the simple process of giving them another label. We could give the noble lord endless instances of this procedure. Usually the Bolsheviks are the victims. Thus last summer the readers of a certain tabloid were regaled with a picture showing the massing of great Red Army forces before the Kremlin just before their departure for the Manchurian border to take part in the then coming war with the Japanese. It was a fine picture, quite spirited and impressive. The only thing wrong about it was that it was actually a photograph of a perfectly peaceful May Day parade which took place before the Kremlin some years before there was any thought of trouble between Japan and Russia over Japan's seizure of Manchuria.

The tabloids have not stopped there. The New York *Graphic,* now defunct, prided itself upon its "composite" pictures drawn by its veracious artists after talking with some anonymous person who claimed to have been present on the occasion depicted by them. This was defended as being "practically the truth" and just what the public wanted. Indeed, Lord Hailsham can think it fortunate that the *Daily Mirror* confined itself to moving the "mob" from Trafalgar Square to Buckingham Palace. It was probably owing to a slight lapse of the imagination of editors and artists that there was not also added a picture showing King George and Queen Mary shaking with terror in their bedroom lest they be hauled to a guillotine.

Being ourselves cranks, and journalists with a highly limited audience, we cannot, however, refrain from expressing our own regret and wishing that our apologies might have some influence across the seas. For the matter has become of serious moment. We are unfortunately headed for a period of most unhappy relationship with Great Britain because of the attitude of Congress and the government in the matter of the international debts. As we have repeatedly pointed out, our refusal to reconsider them, our insistence upon the pound of flesh, is bound to increase American unpopularity abroad to a most uncomfortable extent. As we write, the daily press reports the French newspapers as "raging" at our refusal to discuss the matter. The present developments seem certain to produce a most dangerous tension, all the more regrettable when one considers the eulogies we bestowed upon our French and British allies during the World War. They were our sacred allies never to be parted from us. The blood of our heroes had mingled with the blood of theirs on Flanders fields. Now, when the whole world is in such a desperate economic crisis as to endanger civilization itself, we consider these selfsame allies to be welchers, if not swindlers—people utterly forgetful of the magnitude of the service rendered to them in their hour of distress, when they had not a pound or a franc left in their respective treasuries. Of course that press to which Lord Hailsham, and every decent journalist, objects, will seek to arouse passion on both sides of the ocean—for in England and in France there are unscrupulous journalists as well as in America—at a time when everybody should do his best to preserve sanity and good-will. The more the pity, the greater the humiliation!

Naughtiness and Art

IN any age most discussion tends to center around certain pet themes. In our own day sex has been so prime a favorite that it has, indeed, very nearly replaced the prospects for rain as the conventional topic of perfunctory conversation. But like every pet theme it begins at last to show signs of wearing out. Arguments—some genuinely important—have been stated so many times that they can no longer be understood. Words have been reiterated until they have lost their meaning, and attitudes have been struck so often that they have degenerated into conventional poses. One longs sometimes either to stop the argument entirely or to begin it again with a fresh start. What is this sex we have been talking so much about?

That stage in the discussion seems to have been reached and passed in the portentous new symposium entitled "Sex in the Arts."* Every effort, to be sure, has been made to give it a journalistic freshness. "Are we so liberal about sex?" runs the "challenging" streamer across the front of the jacket, and upon the back is printed a series of equally challenging —if monotonously repetitious—statements: "There is a serious blockage between our poetry and its reserve of sexual energy"; "there is . . . practically no such thing as sex in the motion pictures"; "the serious modern drama in its treatment of sex is timid, squeamish, superficial, and conventional"; "in the latest music neither love nor 'feeling through women' predominates"; "Cézanne's nudes are sexless"; and so on. But curiously enough it remains impossible to answer the question: "Are we so liberal about sex?" because no one takes the trouble to define what, precisely, "liberal about sex" means. Hence the whole discussion tends to go round and

* "Sex in the Arts." Edited by J. F. McDermott and Kendall B. Taft. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

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round without anybody's knowing exactly what the rest are talking about. Should we, perhaps, adopt the formula of Mr. Marquis's almost forgotten heroine and ask ourselves every night before going to bed: Have I been liberal about sex today, or have I failed? Did there exist "a serious blockage" between that poem I wrote and my "reserve of sexual energy"? Was that nude I painted unsatisfactorily sexless? Did "feeling through women" predominate in that concerto? Such helpful self-examinations were doubtless a regular feature of the lives of Michelangelo, Shakespeare, and Bach.

Not all the individual papers are as fatuous as the selected quotations might suggest. Morris Ernst, for example, writes an interesting summary of the present state of our obscenity laws, and John Cowper Powys analyzes acutely the attitude toward sex exhibited in the works of Proust, Dreiser, and Joyce. Indeed, some of the individual authors tend to take a position exactly opposite to that which the plan of the book seems at first sight to suggest. Thus, to take one, Ernest Boyd rails against the tendency to lard biography with more or less frankly salacious details, and declares roundly: "The happiest sex life is one that has no history, and biography is neither more nor less concerned with sex than with digestion." But what one misses nearly everywhere is any adequate realization of the fact that the "problem" of sex in art is hardly to be solved in terms so simple as those used in the statements: "There ought to be more of it," or "There ought to be less."

Several of the authors seem vaguely aware of this fact. One or two even go so far as to imply that the "sexlessness" of certain painters and musicians is due exactly to the fact that the direct expression of their sexual impulses was so little inhibited, and that, as a matter of fact, one generally gets in art less and less of the sort of thing the sex boys are clamoring for as one gets more and more of that frank and fearless attitude for which they are also clamoring. But the trouble with the whole symposium is that such reasonably fresh topics are touched upon only incidentally, while a kind of adolescent gabble goes on and on as it has gone on for fifteen years wherever advanced youth got together for the purpose of startling itself.

Many persons would agree that certain ridiculous taboos are still in force today. Some at least would go so far as to maintain that there is a legitimate place for books and pictures whose purpose is frankly erotic. But few with any adequate understanding of either the history or the processes of art actually suppose that the contemporary artist is suffering chiefly from these same taboos, or that contemporary art would flower into a new magnificence if it began to talk even more frequently and frankly about sex. The question is not primarily *how much* it can say, but *what* it can say, and it seems clear enough that the love poems and novels and plays of today do not suffer by comparison with the masterpieces of the past chiefly because their authors dare speak less frankly. Indeed, whatever limitations may still exist so far as language and situation are concerned, the obvious fact is that the works which push as far as these limitations will permit are the very ones in which the authors have said all they have to say when the "daring" word has been defiantly articulated or set up in type. The time has passed when the most crying need is for more frankness. The need today is for thoughts or feelings or situations which are really worth being frank about.

Universities and Change

UNDER the auspices of New York University a three-day conference was recently held in New York for the purpose of discussing the relation of the modern university to the changing social status, which marked, perhaps, the climax of the career of the Chancellor of the University, Elmer E. Brown. He is now retiring after a long service, during which the university has undergone its full share of the expansion which has marked our prosperous years in almost all our institutions of learning. The conference discussions covered many fields and appeared on the surface to indicate that the university of today recognizes the existence of a changing social order and begins to realize that it must adjust itself to the new conditions now arising—an adjustment which will certainly compel it to scrap a great deal of what it has been teaching heretofore.

When, however, it comes to the question of the actual contributions made at the conference, the only two of genuine importance were made by Englishmen, Sir Arthur Salter, and Sir James Irvine of the University of St. Andrew. American university presidents galore maintained that our universities must not despise anything intellectual, but not one of them had the courage to define what he meant by intellectual, or to draw a sharp line between intellectual activities and other pursuits to which the name cannot be applied. Let us for a moment concede to President Coffman that State universities must be of service to their communities in all activities of an intellectual nature. How far does this help us? Will President Coffman run through the catalogue of the University of Minnesota and tell us which courses and opportunities are intellectual and which are merely practical? Does the student have to be trained to pare potatoes, to wash dishes, to write photo-play scenarios, and to do all the other transient and ridiculous things that serve a menial, or not even a menial, part in human society? Did any university president make a stand for culture, for intelligence, as against the things which induce big business men to give money, and legislatures to vote money, to our so-called higher institutions of learning? Sir Arthur Salter took the bit in his teeth in dealing with economics, whether rightly or wrongly, and Sir James Irvine was clear and unmistakable in discussing the intellectual function. Few others mentioned music or art or philosophy or in fact anything concrete or vital. You cannot start a discussion in America on the details of education or policy for fear of offending someone who may have a dollar to bestow.

In respect to higher education, we are just where we are in respect to political leadership—that is, nowhere. Opportunities have improved through the efforts of individual scholars who have made infinite personal sacrifices during the last twenty-five years, but no Gilman is today in charge of a higher educational institution of learning. There are now vacancies in the presidencies of Harvard, Princeton, New York University, and Toledo University, to mention only a few. Will their trustees look for a Gilman? Yet the opportunity and the need for a forward-looking leader in the field of education are greater than ever, precisely because of the fact that the world is changing and our own economic order dissolving so rapidly.

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The British Parliamentary Crisis

By WILLIAM A. ROBSON

EXACTLY a century has elapsed since the passing of the great British Reform Bill of 1832, which was the first step toward the establishment of parliamentary democracy not only in England but anywhere in Europe. A special interest, therefore, attaches to the crisis in parliamentary government which has arisen in England. It is worth recalling that as recently as the end of the World War the Allies were under the impression that in order to make the world safe for democracy little more was necessary beyond persuading or compelling such countries as Germany and Czecho-Slovakia to adopt representative institutions centering round a cabinet responsible to the legislature, with a president more or less on the American model thrown in. We no longer suffer from that dangerous delusion. But many people do not realize that events have moved so fast in recent years that for the purpose of analyzing the institutions of representative government in England the history of the past decade is more significant than that of the past century.

That history may be regarded from two separate aspects. There is, in the first place, the march of events, the changes which have actually taken place in the realm of facts. In the second place, there is the stream of ideas, the changes which have taken place in the realm of thought and opinion. One of the most conspicuous features of the march of events has been the decline in parliamentary control over the process of legislation. The practice of delegating legislative power to executive departments and ministers of the crown has increased enormously with the vast growth in the scope of government that has taken place in recent years. The legislative output of government departments is now several times as large, in terms of the volume of print it occupies, as that of Parliament itself; and it covers every field of activity. So alarming was this manifestation thought to be by a large and influential body of opinion that an official committee was appointed by the Lord Chancellor to consider the matter and to report what safeguards were necessary to secure the constitutional principle of the sovereignty of Parliament. The committee has recently reported. It declares that in modern conditions delegation of the law-making power to executive organs is necessary and inevitable and that there is no ground for uneasiness provided certain safeguards against abuse are put into operation. But although the report may enable citizens to sleep quiet in their beds on the assurance that no act of tyranny or despotism is being perpetrated, the fact remains that the most essential function of a legislative assembly has to no small extent passed from Parliament to the Civil Service.

The decline of parliamentary control has been specially marked in recent months. The Import Duties Act, 1932, which imposes the new general tariff of 10 per cent on all goods with certain specified exceptions, leaves it to the Treasury, after receiving a recommendation from an advisory committee, to exempt further goods of any class or description from liability to the duty. The Treasury may, furthermore, on receiving a recommendation from the committee, impose a higher rate of duty on luxury articles or commodities which are, or are capable of being, produced in the United Kingdom in adequate quantities. The Abnormal Importations Act, 1931, gave power to the Board of Trade, with the consent of the Treasury, to impose for a period of six months custom duties up to 100 per cent on the value of certain classes of articles which were being imported in abnormal quantities. I do not know of any other country where the vital question of tariff policy has in effect been surrendered by the legislature to the executive. High-water mark was, however, reached by the National Economy Act, 1931, which did not specify the economies to be made, but empowered various ministers to effect them in their own departments, with such arbitrary modification or termination of existing contractual or statutory obligations as they thought fit. This device avoided parliamentary debate or even specific submission to the House of Commons of the proposed reductions.

Changes of far-reaching significance have also taken place in regard to the Cabinet. Mr. MacDonald, when he took office in 1929 as Prime Minister in the minority Labor Government, called upon the House of Commons to transform itself into what he called "a Council of State." This meant in practice that the Government would not resign in the customary manner if defeated on what it considered minor issues. This advice was acted upon to a considerable extent in the ensuing two years; and the Government remained in office even when defeated on its trade-union bill and on its education program—two measures of outstanding importance.

These departures from tradition were, however, as nothing compared with the extraordinary development which was announced to an astonished public on January 22, 1932. On that day an official statement revealed that "the Cabinet has had before it the report of the Committee (of the Cabinet) on the Balance of Trade, and after prolonged discussion it has been found impossible to reach a unanimous conclusion on the committee's recommendations." The Cabinet, in order to maintain national unity in the presence of the problems confronting Great Britain and the rest of the world, "has accordingly determined that some modification of usual ministerial practice is required and has decided that ministers who find themselves unable to support the conclusions arrived at by the majority of their colleagues on the subject of import duties and cognate matters are to be at liberty to express their views by speech and vote."

With these pregnant words the National Ministry swept away at one stroke the whole conception of collective responsibility which for more than a century has formed the cornerstone of cabinet government. Again and again in the past members of a Cabinet have disagreed in private with the policy of their colleagues; but resignation or loyal support of the majority decision has been the inflexible rule. The famous remark of Lord Melbourne, when at the end of a long Cabinet discussion he replied to another minister who asked what had been decided, "It doesn't matter what

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we say so long as we all say the same thing," summed up briefly the essential principle of solidarity which has for generations been striven for by those who comprised the Cabinet, been relied upon by Parliament, and been expected by the general public. The result of the revolutionary change now introduced—euphemistically described as "an agreement to disagree"—has been that ministers have spoken against the proposals of their colleagues both inside and outside Parliament; they have voted against the most important measures of the Government; and they have promoted candidates at by-elections in opposition to candidates supported by their colleagues. And now at last, with the resignation of Lord Snowden, Sir Herbert Samuel, and other Liberal ministers, the futility of the arrangement has become manifest.

The notion of permitting a man to remain in the Cabinet without being compelled to adhere to a particular policy seems to offer an opportunity of avoiding all the narrowness and prejudice of party government, and of forming and maintaining a ministry of all the talents. But on second thought it is clear that serious disadvantages must follow. At the last general election nothing in the nature of a program was placed before the electorate. Mr. MacDonald asked for a "doctor's mandate," which was explained to mean the free hand accorded to a physician to apply whatever remedies he may deem the patient to require. All the various parties to the coalition claimed to be enthusiastically supporting Mr. MacDonald and the National Government he proposed to form; yet in hundreds of constituencies their rival candidates were in bitter conflict at the polls. There was, indeed, no common program which could possibly find acceptance among so heterogeneous a multitude; and the battle cry of most National candidates was little more than an appeal to "vote for me and not the other fellow."

It is generally agreed that one reason why the English parliamentary system has worked extremely well in the past is because there have existed two great parties, Liberal and Conservative, which were divided on grounds of real principle but which nevertheless accepted the general political and economic institutions of Victorian capitalist democracy sufficiently to make cooperation possible. That situation has undergone a profound change since the war.

In the first place, there have been three main parties; and the simple majority which the two-party system insures has not always been forthcoming. The difficulties of parliamentary government in such circumstances are formidable. Quite apart from being unable to command the passage of legislation, the Government is unable to control even the time-table of the House of Commons.

In recent times the three main parties have been splitting up into a series of fragments. At the last general election the Conservative Party consisted of the mass of the rank and file, made up of the followers of Mr. Baldwin, and a smaller contingent, calling themselves imperial free traders, who follow the directions of Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere. These ennobled newspaper proprietors initiated the Empire Free Trade crusade, and last year ran candidates at several by-elections in active opposition to official Conservative candidates. The Liberal Party split up into the National Liberals, following Sir John Simon; the Liberal National group, led by Sir Herbert Samuel; and the small family party headed by Mr. Lloyd George. The Labor Party divided into three portions: the great bulk of the party, which acknowledges the leadership of Arthur Henderson; the twenty or thirty National Laborites who continue to follow Mr. MacDonald; and the members of the Independent Labor Party, which has now completely broken away on the left from the official Labor Party. And then, in addition, there is Sir Oswald Mosley's New Party, which has a clear affinity with fascism. Mosley was in the last Labor Government until he resigned in discontent and formed his own party, which has failed to secure a single seat in the present Parliament despite generous financial support, but which nevertheless imposed serious injury on the Labor Party candidates in a number of doubtful constituencies.

It may be imagined how confusing and perplexing the English voter, accustomed to a simple issue and a straight fight, has found this remarkable array of parties and prophets. The formation of the National Government has thrown an appearance of unity over some of the discordant elements, but the underlying dissension remains. It is interesting to speculate whether the great English parties are disintegrating into a system of irreconcilable groups of the type familiar on the continent of Europe, or whether two vast new parties, Socialist and Capitalist, are in process of formation. No one can answer the question; but the English form of parliamentary government indubitably requires for its effective operation a two-party system.

Even though two great parties should again emerge from the ashes of the existing organizations, it is unlikely that the historic parliamentary process could be maintained if the divergence of outlook between them became too far-reaching. Democracy can only work when the essentials are not in dispute. As the late Lord Balfour once remarked, "While we agree about fundamentals we can afford to bicker about details." Democratic government is known to break down when there are deep religious or national differences within the same political state. The same is possibly true of economic differences. Certainly the gulf in English society between the propertied and the non-propertied interests is not making democracy easier. And to some observers it appears that the gulf is widening. They argue that the wealthier classes were willing to allow Liberal and Labor ministries to govern and to impose direct taxation up to a certain point, but that point appears now to have been reached. The events of last year suggest that any far-reaching proposals toward socialization or government control of industry, the further expansion of the social services on the basis of increased taxation of the wealthy, or even expensive relief works or maintainance schemes for the unemployed, would be checked or threatened by the creation of a financial crisis involving a flight from the pound, pressure on government from the banks, a revolt in the City, a warning of imminent bankruptcy by bill-brokers and so forth, and the entire paraphernalia of disaster attendant upon the occurrence of that mysterious event known as a "lack of confidence."

I am not concerned with the rights or wrongs, the merits or inevitability, of all this. I wish only to point out that it would constitute a tremendous challenge to parliamentary government on the English model. It means that in certain circumstances extra-parliamentary action may be taken with the deliberate object of preventing one of the

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parties from carrying out its program. This is quite a new development in the English policy. It sets for the first time a limit to the sovereignty of Parliament. It produces a new kind of "unconstitutionality"—decided, not by duly qualified and appointed judges sitting in open court with the consent of the people, but by a small minority of financial interests, unknown to the nation, whose action will be guided by no principle of law but by their own self-interest.

Many leaders of opinion are desperately anxious to preserve the supremacy of the Government as an essential feature of the English constitution, even if it involves a modification of prevailing party methods. Ramsay MacDonald told the Select Committee on Public Business last year that he regards the doctrine that it is the function of the Opposition to oppose as "a crime against the state." Sir Herbert Samuel has similarly called for what he calls a new Kellogg Pact for "the renunciation of obstruction as an instrument of policy." Bernard Shaw declares that the real demand is for a Government without an Opposition. Our plan, he says, of setting up one row of politicians to do our public work, and simultaneously setting up an opposite row to "hinder them, defeat them, disgrace them, and talk them out, is admirable for reducing barons, cardinals, kings, and, indeed, rulers of all sorts to impotence. . . . Unfortunately it is equally effective in reducing government itself to impotence. That being so, it will have to go."

I have endeavored so far to show that in recent times the dominant principles of the English parliamentary system have to a greater or less degree been contravened or menaced. Parliamentary control over legislation, government by a majority party, the collective responsibility of the Cabinet, the supervision by Parliament of the executive, even the sovereignty of Parliament—every one of these foundations has been shaken by the events of the past decade. The constitutional structure is evidently undergoing a profound modification.

The march of events has been accompanied by a stream of criticism directed at Parliament. The criticism has come from persons of all parties and persuasions, from the right no less than from the left. Mr. Lloyd George, the Father of the House of Commons, said in evidence before the Select Committee on Procedure on Public Business: "There is a growing feeling that Parliament is not coping with its task and not altogether discharging the trust which the nation has reposed in it." It is, he explained in less formal words to a newspaper reporter, like an old windjammer, which was equal to the traffic of a century ago but is unable to cope with a hundredth part of the enormous trade of today. Winston Churchill, now a diehard Conservative, declares that Parliament is on trial; and that if it continues to show itself incapable of offering sincere and effective guidance, it will fall under a far-reaching condemnation. In his view the British parliamentary system is not suited to dealing with economic problems, which, unlike political questions, cannot be solved by *will* alone but require knowledge and thought. He therefore calls upon Parliament and the Government to create a new instrument to cope with our financial and industrial difficulties in the shape of a non-political body composed of experts in this field, free from party allegiances but chosen in proportion to party groupings by the House of Commons. This body would be subordinate to Parliament—an economic sub-parliament—and its functions would be to supply the legislature with comprehensive and unified advice on matters of economic policy.

Mrs. Sidney Webb (Lady Passfield), for long a prominent Socialist and Labor leader, tells us that there is today "a deepening conviction that our machinery of government is no longer equal to its task"; and that unless the matter can be remedied we may see a dictatorship, either Fascist or Communist. The primary evil, according to Mrs. Webb, is a Cabinet so overloaded with work as to make constructive thinking and decisive action beyond human capacity. The vast increase in the functions of government prevents the Cabinet from being an effective instrument; and this overloading has led to bureaucracy on the one hand and the congestion of business in the House of Commons on the other. The general result of all these evils, Mrs. Webb points out, is that only a fraction of the matters which need attention can be put into the Government's program; and only a small proportion even of the measures so proposed can be actually dealt with in any session. Mrs. Webb proposes a drastic remedy by devolving all the "housekeeping" functions of government, consisting mainly of the social services, to a National Assembly entirely separated from the existing Parliament both as regards its election and also its method of working. Within the National Assembly the cabinet system would be replaced by the committee system of administration which is found everywhere in English local government. This destroys completely the idea of cabinet responsibility and weakens the position of the political parties.

Sir Herbert Samuel, until recently Home Secretary in the National Government, is in general accord with the diagnosis and the remedies proposed by Mrs. Webb. In his long experience of active political life he has found the legislature to give insufficient attention to foreign and imperial policy; and he agrees that the executive is overburdened. Above all, the control by Parliament over national expenditure has fallen into abeyance. The estimates are passed as a matter of course; and he tells us that there is no case within living memory of the House of Commons reducing on its own initiative, and on financial grounds, any estimate presented to it by the Government. He might have added that the Cabinet never considers the estimates of national expenditure as a whole. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is left to settle the estimates of each department with the minister concerned; and the budget is never revealed to the Cabinet except just before budget day.

These criticisms are significant because they come, not from professors of political science or irresponsible critics outside the arena of government, but from statesmen who have had long experience of the practical working of the political machine. The observers and the professors have, of course, a great deal to say on the subject; and they too, it is scarcely necessary to add, are highly dissatisfied with the present state of affairs. There is a remarkable consensus of opinion, among representative leaders of all the great parties, that Parliament is not adequately fulfilling the extended functions which the modern state demands of it; that the Cabinet is overwhelmed with work; that the ascendancy of the executive is creating a tendency toward bureaucracy; that there is inadequate control by the legislature over finance and over imperial and foreign affairs. The various proposals for devolution and delegation of duties would profoundly

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modify many of the characteristic features of parliamentary government.

I have endeavored to give a brief account of the main dangers which threaten the British constitution at the present time and which have produced the crisis in parliamentary government. In some such form they menace representative institutions in the majority of democratic countries which have not been overwhelmed by communism or fascism.

If one were to attempt to summarize the defects of representative government—and I here use the term in its widest meaning to include both parliamentary and presidential systems—in terms which would be understood by the man in the street, one might put the matter in this way: Fourteen years have now passed since the conclusion of the greatest and most devastating war in history. Yet the condition of the world is far more serious in 1932 than it was in 1919. An economic depression of appalling dimensions has spread over the whole world and is affecting the welfare of every class in every community. It is generally agreed among the most authoritative economists that the causes are in large measure to be found among such factors as reparations, debt settlements, tariff policies, quotas, and other restrictions on international trade, and the management of currency and credit. When one looks broadly and dispassionately at the action during the past decade of the leading parliaments in regard to these and cognate matters, it is difficult not to feel that there has been a universal failure to achieve wise action. Indeed, representative legislatures and governments appear frequently to have expressed the most reactionary and least enlightened tendencies in the various countries; and their policies have intensified the economic distress from which the whole world is suffering.

Even apart from economic matters, the parliaments have been backward in interpreting the emotions and desires of the peoples in regard to such a purely political question as disarmament, for which there is clearly an almost universal popular demand. The absence of any serious attempt by the Western countries during the past thirteen years to compose their differences, at bottom scarcely more than lovers' quarrels, in face of the tremendous challenge to the whole fabric of Western society offered by Russia, is one of the most astonishing phenomena of the day. At a time when the most obvious need of the world has been to raise its public or political life to the same plane of international comprehension and cooperation as its private economic life, the parliaments have encouraged the narrowest nationalisms and fanned the flames of distrust. The economic crisis is in this sense a measure of the political crisis among the democratically governed peoples. Representative institutions have, in the years which have elapsed since 1919, shown small capacity for yielding to a tormented world the peace, prosperity, and good-fellowship which it so sorely needs.

No one can foretell what the future holds. But two remarks may be hazarded in conclusion. First, that in the political arena, as in many other spheres, progress is a condition of stability. Second, that that condition is not at present being satisfied. Parliamentary government is therefore at present in a position of definite instability; and unless considerable modification in structure, function, and attitude is introduced, the disequilibrium will become so acute that it will make catastrophic change not merely possible but probable.

Soviet Progress and Poverty

By LOUIS FISCHER

Kharkov, Ukrainian Republic

THE chauffeur who drove me about Kharkov and to neighboring villages, commissars of the Ukrainian Republic, foreign specialists, my chambermaid, and a shoeblack around the corner from the Red Hotel, all asked me the same question: "Have you seen the new Gosprom Square?" Yes, I had seen it. "It is the largest in Europe. The entire work was done in two months." The square is, indeed, bigger than the Place de la Concorde or the Lustgarten, and even greater in extent than the Red Square in Moscow. It measures half a mile in length and about four hundred feet in width. When I visited Kharkov in August a year ago, this area was covered with a few houses, car lines, an irregular mound some ten feet high, and debris. During the summer the earth was cut away, the ground leveled, and a beautifully drained square laid out and paved. A gigantic monument to Lenin or Dzerzhinsky is contemplated for the center of the expanse. The square is really egg-shaped. At one bow end stands the Palace of Industry. Executed in the modern style, with flat surfaces, vast window space, connecting bridges between buildings, sharp angles, and maximum exposure to sunlight, this six-to-fourteen-story structure is the finest in the Soviet Union.

The Palace of Industry houses the trusts and syndicates of the Ukraine. But the government has borrowed some space in the building, so that now the Council of People's Commissars, the Commissariats of Light and Heavy Industries, and some sections of the Commissariats of Justice and Education live under its broad roof. On one of the long sides of the ellipse the Commissariat of Agriculture is finishing its own home, and next to it a big hotel for tourists is nearing completion. Opposite, the Gosplan will soon have a new skyscraper, and on a neighboring plot ground is being cleared for an eighteen-story structure to accommodate all other governmental branches. At the narrow end of the egg oval, facing the Palace of Industry, is the building of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

The idea of the square thus becomes clear. On its periphery will be situated the entire official machinery of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Any person who knows how life is complicated in Moscow by the fact that even the several parts of a single commissariat may be located in distant wards of the city will realize what it means to have every office of the government within one compact area. A tremendous amount of post-office activity, automobile travel, and, of course, time and energy is saved by concentrating the whole government of this republic with 31,500,000 inhabitants in

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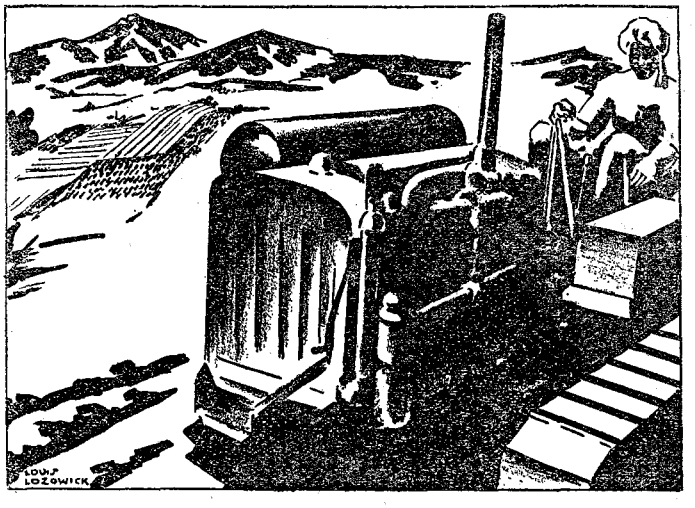
three or four neighboring structures all within easy distance of the party headquarters.

The square and its buildings are now a landmark in Kharkov. But they do not bulk large in the volume of construction which the city has witnessed in the last few years. Baedeker put the pre-war population of Kharkov at 248,000. The Soviet census of 1926 gave it 410,000. Early in 1932 it counted 650,000, plus a floating population estimated at 50,000 or more. When I first saw Kharkov in December, 1922, it was a small, ugly mud town. Now it is a metropolis with numerous trolley lines, hundreds of paved streets, bus lines, and above all many new apartment houses, infinitely more, in proportion to the population, than in Moscow or Leningrad. Home building, however, has not kept pace with the growth in population. The city is crowded, like all Soviet cities, for the revolution is the expression of and at the same time the agent for the urbanization of Russia. I visited villages fifty, sixty, and seventy kilometers from Kharkov. I entered innumerable peasant huts. "Where is your mother?" I asked a girl of fifteen who was taking care of her baby brother. "In the fields," she answered. "Where is your father?" "He is working in the city." I got similar replies in many other homes.

I traveled to First Red Army Village, formerly Simonovka. Of its 172 households 54 have surrendered their land in the last three years and taken up residence in Kharkov. Some still retain their homes in the village, where an old grandmother or an elderly brother may live and keep a cow and a few chickens. In the summer the whole family comes back to spend its vacation on the land. Part of Red Army Village is organized as the Red Army Artel. (Red Army, incidentally, does not mean that the members of the collective have more than a sentimental relation to the armed forces of the republic.) This kolhoz contains 100 households and a total of 463 "eaters," or "souls" as they used to be styled in Czarist times. But it has only 68 regular working people, of whom 23 are women. During the last harvest 20 men temporarily returned from Kharkov to help (the reverse side of this medal is a high percentage of fluidity among factory labor), and with the younger folks who join in for special seasonal activity, there were 176 persons to bring in the crop. That was the maximum. The actual labor force is rarely over 100, including children.

This is a fairly typical instance of the exodus from village to city which has assumed such proportions in the U. S. S. R. that it constitutes a really important historical phenomenon. City life, despite its hardships, is much more comfortable than life on the farm, and the population tends to drift to places where hours are shorter and income more certain. My impression is that Kharkov is better supplied with manufactured goods than Moscow. Its citizens wear better shoes than those in Moscow. The explanation probably lies in the circumstance that since it is the capital of the Soviet Union's biggest agricultural region, some commodities shipped to it for distribution in collectives to stimulate peasant activity are held up and sold in town. Such things happen in Russia. It is not impossible for an official, say on the Volga, simply to commandeer a train of textiles en route to Kazakstan or Siberia and give it to consumers in his own region. The history of goods in transport is devious and strange, and a shrewd city administrator always has an advantage over the helpless village which is the ultimate destination. The government seeks to cope with this unfortunate situation, and lately the collectives have been receiving more than they used to.



The urban toiler, nevertheless, enjoys a thousand benefits and delights that are denied to the peasant, and now that jobs can be had for the asking (industrial enterprises, in fact, send agents to the countryside to coax peasants into town), the trend of population is in the direction of the large cities. In the Ukraine, for instance, the urban population has risen from 13 per cent of the total in 1921 to 28 per cent at present. This means that some 4,500,000 people out of 31,500,000 have changed their place and mode of life—a fact of tremendous social and cultural significance. The rate of the flow away from the village was accelerated by the Five-Year Plan and the possibilities of employment which it offered, but collectivization drove as many peasants to the cities as industrialization, and in the last year a mistaken policy has swelled the tide. Next winter and all of next year the towns of the Ukraine, and of other regions as well, can look forward to big influxes of Ukrainian peasants in search of food and work. For all is not well in Soviet Ukraine.

Villages near a town like Kharkov normally enjoy greater prosperity than more distant agricultural units. Yet even those I saw within thirty-five miles of the city limits had no meat or sugar. In the Poltava, Vinnitsa, Podolsk, and Kiev regions, conditions are much worse. The winter will be hard. I think there is no starvation anywhere in the Ukraine now—after all, they have just gathered in their harvest—but it was a bad harvest. It was bad because of unfavorable weather; the Ukraine got rain when it needed dry weather and dry weather when it needed rain. That, however, is only part of the explanation. One kolhoz I visited had lost 48 out of 108 horses from lack of fodder, and the remaining animals were weak and emaciated. The collective had no tractor and begged the Assistant Commissar of Agriculture who was my guide to send one. That was on October 5. The sowing season would end on the fifteenth at the latest, and a tractor for plowing was indispensable. Yet the next day I saw 240 tractors standing on the sidings of the Kharkov tractor plant. They had been standing there for three days because no freight platforms were available. The day I spent at the factory the platforms began to arrive, and two days later when I went back to interview Svistun,

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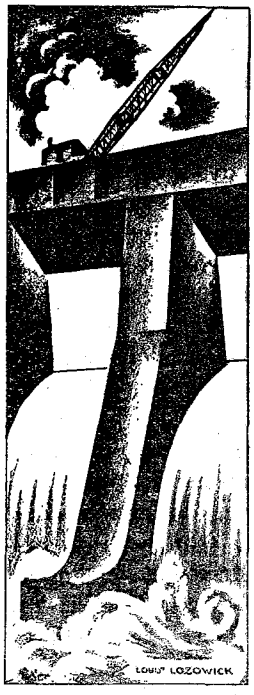
the director of the factory, many tractors had been carried away, but the loss of three days at a crucial time is criminal.

Unfavorable weather and the scarcity of tractors and draft animals do not, however, exhaust the list of evils which have interfered with the agricultural development of the Ukraine and other parts of the Union. One of the chief contributing factors, perhaps the chief factor, is the government's grain-collection policy. In some places the state procures from the peasant, at ridiculously low non-inflation prices, as much as half of his total crop, and for the entire country grain procurements rise as high as 30 per cent per year. The peasant regards the practice of government collections as an exorbitant tax. It kills his incentive to produce a marketable surplus. He neglects his fields. He goes to work in the city. Especially after this trip to the Ukraine I am convinced that the whole system of grain procurements (*khlebo-zagotovka*) must soon disappear. Moscow cannot perpetuate an arrangement which permits official stores to charge a ruble for a small roll when the peasant gets only one ruble eighty kopecks for a whole pood. Before the next spring planting, and preferably during the winter, say in January, some new method will have to be introduced to convince the peasants, collectivized or otherwise, that a large share of the product of their labor will remain with them. I would suggest a return to the fixed grain income tax (*prodnalog*) which the peasants paid in kind until 1923 and in money until about 1926 or 1927. Then procurements made their appearance. They remind one inevitably of the requisitions of the civil-war period. In fact, grain collections rose from 14 per cent of the total crop in 1926-27 to 31 per cent in 1931-32. This was perhaps necessary until collectivization and industrialization got under way. Now the day of procurements is ending. The plenum of the Communist Central Committee which met at the end of September officially did not discuss agriculture. But it is ridiculous to suppose that Russia's policy-makers met without considering peasant problems. To indicate at the present moment, however, that a change is imminent would interfere with the grain collections now in progress. Collections end on January 15. That date, I feel, ought to close a long chapter of bitter relations between the Bolsheviks and the peasantry.



Dnieperstroi

When, despite violent differences of opinion among the highest Bolshevik leaders regarding the advisability thereof, the Soviets started work on Dnieperstroi in 1927, they were, in effect, serving notice on the world that Russia had decided to become a great, modern, industrialized Power. Now the dam is making electric current. It is a great sight. Here, on what was a wind-swept prairie, the Bolsheviks have not merely erected a solid concrete wall 110 feet high to block the angry Dnieper, and not only built the mightiest power station in the world with a maximum capacity of 810,000 horse power, but they have created a whole city.

On October 10 Dnieperstroi was opened, amid national rejoicing. During the festivities that morning I stood in the rear of the crowd that had gathered around the power plant. A grizzled peasant was admiring the dam, beautiful in its simplicity and force. "Pretty thing," he said. "Now I know where my boots went." A country's shoes, butter, eggs, meat, and health entered into the foundation and superstructure of the dam.

The hydroelectric power station has commenced operation. That, however, is but the first stage. The question now is: When will the dam give back the boots and butter that made it? The station is on the right bank of the Dnieper. On the left bank rises an industrial "combinat," or factory group, which will use its power. This combinat consists of four aluminum factories with a capacity of 250,000 tons a year, a group of metal plants, open-hearth furnaces, blast furnaces, and rolling mills which will produce high-quality steel not now made in the U. S. S. R., and a third unit for coke and chemicals manufacture. There is, in addition, a large city of dwellings, hospitals, clubs, communal restaurants, and so forth. None of the factories, however, are complete. Only a small fraction of the energy of Dnieperstroi, therefore, is being utilized. In fact, the dam itself still requires a considerable amount of work.

But if the dam were quite complete, the situation would be even more aggravating, for then the power house would yield millions of kilowatts which could find no consumer until the left-bank combinat was completed. This is the outstanding difficulty and mistake of the Dnieperstroi project. One part was ready before the other. The loss is considerable. Nor is it confined to the Dnieper enterprise. This sort of disproportion characterizes many giant Soviet construction jobs. In some places, at Magnitogorsk for instance, huge blast furnaces were built, while open-hearth furnaces and rolling mills lagged so far behind that the pig iron could not be converted into the much-needed steel. As a result, the government, to its financial embarrassment, had to import this year over a million tons of steel.

Behind a screen of official verbiage so thick that most observers apparently failed to see through it, this problem was dealt with in the Central Committee's resolutions of October 2. The new orders are for a more even development of the industrial units under construction so that they shall turn out a usable product as early as possible. No new "giants" are to be started. Though the Ukraine is still the Soviet Union's largest industrial center, only three small factories will be erected there in 1933. Not a single new metallurgical plant is contemplated for the Ukraine during the entire second Five-Year Plan. Large factories scarcely started will purposely be neglected if that releases materials, labor, and funds for the quick completion of lesser units which can immediately produce goods. The Ukraine is building five tremendous canning factories. Now, under the new policy, it will concentrate on two of these, finish them with all dispatch, and then tackle the remaining three. Capital investments are to be made effective with the least possible delay. The Kharkov central authorities recently organized a special Inauguration Commission, whose duty it is to push building operations so as to start the commercial operation of sixty-five new factories before the end of 1932.

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The goal of all these efforts is an increase in the volume of consumers' goods which will weaken inflationary tendencies, create a new labor incentive in city and village, and raise the standard of living. Though the capital investment in all Ukrainian industry will decline in 1933, the investment in light industries which produce commodities for everyday private use will be doubled. A gigantic sum is to be devoted by the Ukrainian government to the construction of homes, baths, and public kitchens—but no clubs. In Kharkov alone new houses containing 450,000 square meters of floor space will be built next year. The new policy demonstrates the maneuvering possibilities which the Five-Year Plan has given the state. For the moment, however, great progress bearing the undeniable promise of better times still mingles with much poverty. If poverty is diluted by partial improvement, it is also true that the promise begins to wear thin. The Bolsheviks realize this and are attempting to move post-haste into the area of performance.

Tampa's Reign of Terror

By ANITA BRENNER

ON November 7, 1931, at the Labor Temple in Ybor City, Tampa, an anonymous brick hit the head of Police Officer David Wilson and somebody's bullet met the shoulder of Police Officer J. N. Byrd. For these injuries thirteen men and two women are now serving sentences totaling fifty-three years—chain-gang and county-farm sentences in sweat-box jails, under circumstances of such brutality that one of the prisoners has gone insane. An added half-dozen were thrown into Tampa's jails for a few months apiece; more, for a few days or weeks; uncounted others have been summarily deported, and their families left in want; and hundreds have been cut off from their jobs in Tampa's cigar factories, but are candidates for relief only at the hands of their terrified fellow-workers.

These facts are plainly reported in the Tampa press, but their meaning in human terms is written in the half-healed scars of a few refugees who have come for aid to the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. Historically the date and the place and the fight and the outcome mean that the United States has a Cuba within its borders, where a gesture of law makes crimes of speech and assembly displeasing to racial prejudices and disrespectful of the profits—depression notwithstanding—in five- and fifteen-cent, quarter, and dollar cigars.

Tampa provides American smokers with 65 per cent of their prosperity cigars, those costing fifteen cents and up, and with several hundred million five-cent cigars, more millions since the crash than before. The industry speaks in respectable millions: a $3,000,000 average internal revenue, a $50,000,000 annual average products value, $5,000,000 to $10,000,000 in wages, besides a few millions of tariff, for most of the tobacco used is imported from Cuba. There are about two hundred factories; forty-five whose annual products are valued at from $5,000 up. It is partly a seasonal industry, rising before the holidays. Bad times have not affected it crucially—a 10 to 20 per cent drop in gross volume, but a disproportionately greater drop in number of workers employed. This may mean that five-cent cigars, whose volume since 1929 has risen enormously at the cost of ten-cent, fifteen-cent, and quarter cigars, are made much more quickly than the more expensive sort, and require fewer hands. It may not mean that five-cent cigars are less profitable.

The industry centers in Ybor City, a Tampa suburb inhabited by a considerable portion of the city's thirty-odd thousand Latins—Italians, Spaniards, Cubans, Mexicans, and South Americans, with a Negro streak not easily measurable on account of erased Cuban color lines. From 10,000 to 15,000 persons work in the cigar factories. They earn: men, from $10 to $12 weekly, women about $6, which makes this one of the lowest-paid manufacturing industries in the United States. Workers must serve a two-year apprenticeship and then take half pay for six or eight months. About half of them know little or no English, and therefore get little more than local news in translation, and a great deal of news from home, which means that they share in the politics and the mass-feeling of the country of their origin. In the case of the Cubans, this makes them intensely revolutionary. Hence Machado keeps spies in Ybor City, and doubtless Mussolini does, too.

Organization of a sort has always existed among the cigar workers because news, especially political and labor news, and more specifically local labor news, is transmitted orally in the shop itself by a reader member of a Readers' Cooperative, paid by the workers. This custom brought from Cuba has always annoyed manufacturers because strikes, walkouts, protests, and petitions could be started and carried out very rapidly with each shop acting as a unit; since the workers choose what is to be read, they control the platform. Some attempt at censorship was made but the forum existed none the less, and when in the early part of 1931 the cigar workers began to cohere into a union around a fiery and apparently much-beloved young Mexican named Juan Hidalgo, known as Jim Nine—aged twenty-three—it grew very rapidly and within a few months numbered over 5,000 members. This organization called itself the Tampa Tobacco Workers Industrial Union. It was affiliated with the Trade Union Unity League, in turn affiliated with the Red International. As a mass it met in the Ybor City Labor Temple, owned by the workers, but it actually debated and deliberated in the shops, and the *Daily Worker* appeared on the readers' stands. Alarm, vigilantes, secret committees, quiet word to the chief of police and the American Legion. The issues: wages, steadily dropping; conditions, bad; Jim Crowism; unemployment.

In September of last year penniless tourists from colder States began percolating into Florida. Tampa announced that it was going to defend itself, and in one day sentenced thirty-five men charged with vagrancy (twenty-two Negro, thirteen white) to three months on the chain gang. A Negro woman was given a month in the county jail. Sentencing Judge Hendry said: "I realize that among the thirty-six persons now held there are some who are worthy, who are out

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of employment and in actual need of food. Others are drifting from city to city with deliberate purpose to pilfer and steal. So far as I am concerned I am unable to segregate one class from another, and therefore will make no distinction here." The Tampa *Tribune* added that this was "the only way to forestall an epidemic of crime . . . they will be fed and clothed and the penalty will not be too severe." Then a chain-ganged vagrant youngster was shot while attempting to escape, and Tampa admitted that there was a relief problem.

To face it a council met and planned: pledges from business to keep workers through the seasonal layoff (December in the cigar factories); public works; propaganda and other measures to keep drifters out; and a relief fund, to be contributed half by business and the other half by the County Commission and the city. Meanwhile the jobless cigar workers were having to help themselves. In October their union stated that hundreds of workers were being discharged, and that when the factories closed for their annual balance they and all the rest would suffer from hunger and want. A Council of Unemployed, raising an emergency winter fund, demanding free rent, gas, and water for the jobless, organized direct resistance to evictions, and three of its leaders were jailed. On November 3 there was a mass-meeting which planned another and bigger protest meeting and parade on the entire issue of unemployment for November 7, the Soviet anniversary. The parade was to march through Tampa's Negro section and with banners and speeches would urge the Negroes to move left. A committee from the Labor Temple headed by one J. E. McDonald asked the Democratic Mayor, Robert E. Lee Chancey, who had been inaugurated two days before, for permission to parade. The Mayor said: "I had no objection to a meeting, but I did to a parade. I told the committee it could not hold such a parade because our Negroes are probably the most peaceable citizens in this county. They are fairly treated, they appreciate what is being done for them, and the very thought of a parade marching through the Negro section in celebration of the Soviet holiday is abhorrent to the minds of the Southern people." He said, however, that he would refer the matter to the council, and left for Georgia to see his sick mother. The committee was to come back the next day at two o'clock, the parade being scheduled for that afternoon.

Acting Mayor Thompson told the committee on the seventh that the council had refused to give permission for a parade. The police were mobilized, riot guns and fire-hose were prepared, and the American Legion was asked to volunteer fifty men. By six o'clock the Labor Temple was jammed, and there was a large overflow on the street in front, but according to the lieutenant in charge there was no line-up for a parade. A detachment of police arrived and attempted to disperse the crowd, telling them there would be no parade; then a cigar worker named Felix Morero "came bouncing out of the building and on to the sidewalk," and according to police witnesses yelped that there were telegrams from the Governor and that there would be a parade. Suppressed, he fought and was hauled off to jail covered with blood, leaving behind him a small free-for-all in which the bullet and the brick mentioned at the beginning of this story struck Officers Byrd and Wilson from somewhere in the crowd.

Reinforcements pushed the people into the Labor Temple and cleared the street. A boy selling the *Daily Worker* was shoved; he yelled and was arrested; his mother objected and was also arrested, and a passerby named José Campo, by occupation a traveling salesman, came to the aid of the woman and was arrested, too. A detachment wedged its way into the Temple and arrested everybody on the platform and anybody else who protested. One of the speakers, Carlos Lezana, was armed, but his gun had not been fired. A red flag, a poster inscribed "Black and White, Unite and Fight," and other banners and literature were also taken to the police station. Then McDonald was picked up at home. Total number of arrests, seventeen, including two women and two minors, a girl and a boy. The Tampa *Tribune* reported the affair as a "clash between police and Communists." Mayor Chancey blamed outside agitators. County Solicitor Skinner announced that he did not know what charges the State would make against the militant reds, but that whatever the charges, they would be in the jurisdiction of the Criminal Court. Bail was set at $10,000 each.

In the next two weeks there were four protest strikes and more arrests were made. Manufacturers organized a Secret Committee, and on November 27 the readers' stands in the factories were dismantled, because "all of the trouble has been originating from anarchistic publications poured into the workers. . . . We had agreed to allow . . . the reading of informative articles or educational books . . . but the abuse of this privilege has obliged the manufacturers to retire it immediately." A walkout followed. Next day a seventy-two-hour strike was called involving 10,000 workers. Business in Ybor City shut down for the period of the strike. The strikers insisted that the prisoners and not the readers were the issue. When they returned to work they were met with a lockout, for, as the New York *Times* stated, "the stock for the Christmas trade had already been made and there was no particular rush for more cigars." Neither did the manufacturers, who must certainly have known that a strike would follow their coup, feel themselves obligated any longer to support the relief program of retaining workers through the slack period.

The factory doors were shut for two weeks, during which time there were some rioting, many arrests, and a raid on the union headquarters, police confiscating its files, membership books, and two cigar boxes containing $750 which had been collected for the defense of the prisoners. The secretary, José Ferras, who had been on the union's pay roll, was deported for vagrancy, and the chief of police announced that the union's membership lists "will possibly be of interest to the federal immigration department, because I am convinced that many aliens are enrolled with the reds and wholesale deportation proceedings may be the outgrowth of the government's investigation."

They were. And two days later Federal Judge Akerman signed an injunction for Jerome Regensberg (Admiration—the Mild Cigar) outlawing the union and restraining "persons named and others" (over a hundred named) from "inciting riotous assemblies in or near the cigar factories or at other places for the purpose of in any way interfering with the free and unmolested conduct of the business of said cigar factories." On December 12 a committee of five appointed by the Mayor announced the conditions upon which the factories reopened: open shop; no reading; no distribution of literature or passing of notes; no speeches; no collections for

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any purpose except relief of workers in distress, and only by permission of factory managers for workers known to them.

The fifteen prisoners were tried in January and the two minors were turned over to the Juvenile Court. The list includes Spaniards, South Americans, Cubans, Mexicans, one American (McDonald); two women, aged Francisca Romero Palacios, widow of Mexico's great pioneer labor leader, Ricardo Flores Magón, and her daughter, Carolina Vazquez, mother of a family of young children, the youngest a year old. They range in shades of political opinion and labor activity from Jim Nine, the leader, to José Campo, the passing traveling salesman, including bewildered individuals of the rank and file such as the Spaniard Cesareo Alvarez, who "came to this country at the age of eighteen . . . and has never been arrested before. He used to save $2 or $3 a month to maintain himself and his family when old and unemployed . . . lost all his money ($2,000) when the banks went broke. . . . His wife told him she was starving, his sons are blacklisted, the landlord is going to evict them . . . and he got a fit . . . and instead of medical attention got the sweat-box." He is now in the Chattahoochie State Hospital for the Insane.

They were all tried together for assault with intent to commit murder (Officer Byrd) and simple assault (Officer Wilson) under a venerable Florida statute which provides that all persons on the scene of a riot who do not aid the police are guilty of whatever happens to a policeman. Thus the mere *presence* of the defendants at the Labor Temple on the night of November 7 was ipso facto evidence of guilt, and the trial became an investigation of who was most militant in the union—in other words, the defendants were tried for communism with much emphasis on the "Black and White, Unite and Fight" theme. Example of cross-examination: "Isn't it true that the International Labor Defense is defending nine Negroes in Alabama who assaulted two white women?"

It was taken for granted that they were all guilty. Seven of the defendants were merely listed, and there was no effort even to prove that they had indeed been present at the fracas. The question was which of them were the most dangerous to cigar interests, and the sentences therefore divided the fifteen into three groups: Jim Nine, Lezana, Bonilla, and McDonald, known leaders, were convicted on the first count (Officer Byrd's shoulder) and were given ten years—chain gang and hard labor; the Spaniard Alvarez and Morero, the only one of the fifteen seen to do any fighting, three years; the rest, including the women, one year, some at the State farm, some in the county jail, some in the chain gang. They appealed their case but the State Supreme Court has not yet, in eleven months, heard the appeal, possibly because the defendants have no money for attorney's fees and their relatives are accused of "racketeering" in the Tampa *Tribune* for trying to collect some. They and their families are of course in extreme want. A cigar worker writes to the International Labor Defense: "We used to give some money to their families but we can't afford to now, but the families are willing to suffer if we can give some to the prisoners. The immigration authorities still visit the houses. They now have headquarters in the Latin section, besides in the post-office building. Every day at least ten people are intimidated. . . . Many are picked up on a moment's notice. They are deported ten and twelve at a time."

Debts, Beer, and Other Troubles

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, November 26

TO the list of bloodless battles should be added the fencing match which President Hoover and Governor Roosevelt have just staged over the foreign debt problem. It was a spectacle which excited little enthusiasm among the partisans of either. The only danger lay in the possibility that one of the duelists might injure himself in ducking too fast and too low. Each statesman seemed to labor under the strange delusion that the campaign was still in progress and that something could be gained by putting the other in a hole. The President certainly made a better show of candor, and his formal statement on the subject was one of the best papers he has issued. On the other hand, as might be expected, the Governor displayed a greater comprehension of the political realities involved in the situation. The thing to be remembered about the debt problem is that Congress will make the final decision—and I would stake my winter overcoat against a Hoover campaign button that neither this Congress nor the next will budge one step in the direction of cancelation, reduction, or postponement. To think of a politician voting heavier taxes on his own constituents while he lessens the burdens of foreign taxpayers is to think of a politician bent on suicide. Some of our Congressmen are limited in their knowledge of foreign affairs, but most of them know full well that the payments which this country receives from its late allies represent a negligible fraction of their respective budgets, and are a drop in the bucket compared to the sums they spend on armaments. So long as that condition remains, Congress will be hard-boiled on the subject of debts. An exception is possible in the case of Great Britain. Opinion here is almost unanimous that the terms of the British settlement are severe, especially as compared with those extended to France and Italy, and there is much sentiment in favor of scaling them down. As for the French, they might as well bay the moon as petition Congress for further concessions. Too many francs have been expended in equipping the armies of Poland and Rumania.

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BEER and shekels will fairly monopolize the attention of the short session soon to open. Two months ago the passage of a beer bill at this session seemed almost impossible; now it seems almost inevitable. Various factors have conspired to reverse the prospect. First, the election; as a result of which those dry Congressmen who survived are flopping over like codfish in a net. Second is the necessity of finding new revenues which will be least obnoxious to those who pay them. Third is the apparent determination of Democratic

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leaders in Congress to avoid a special session after the inauguration. This determination is not very creditable to those who harbor it, and will be overruled by the new President if he has the courage of his campaign promises. It goes without saying that Congress will be unable, during the short session, to inaugurate any adequate program for the rehabilitation of agriculture and industry, and if adequate measures are to be taken, a special session is imperative. The clamor for relief will rise as the mercury falls, economists will continue to point to the ruinous retaliations invited by the Hawley-Smoot tariff, and such problems as disarmament and the World Economic Conference will cry to high heaven for the attention of the legislative body. But some of the Democratic politicians can only remember that special sessions usually have turned out to be political poison, that Mr. Hoover's troubles started with one, and that perhaps self-preservation is the better part of statesmanship. A terrific propaganda is being waged in behalf of the adoption of a general sales tax at the short session, and the signs are ominous. Some of the Democrats who fought the good fight against it at the last session have flopped and others are standing first on one foot and then on the other. All the influence that William R. Hearst possesses with the new Administration will be exerted in behalf of a sales tax, and he will be powerfully abetted by all the other fat cats desiring to shift the tax burden from their own thick purses to the market baskets of the poor. La Guardia and Norris will have trouble stopping them this time.

* * * * *

DEFEAT has its compensations, and the retiring Republicans will reap some of them on March 4. When Mr. Hoover embarks for London or Palo Alto, when Jim Watson starts back to his native cow pastures, when Elder Smoot turns his face toward the Utah beet fields, and George Moses buys a ticket for Nashua, each can treat himself to a luxurious chuckle, because each will see a Democratic Administration confronted by the largest and most voracious horde of office-seekers and plum-pickers ever assembled under one flag. The abnormal amount of unemployment, coupled with the circumstance that the Democrats have been out of power for twelve years, has produced a condition from which many a heartburn will ensue. A perspiring Democratic member of the House told me the other day, as he toiled through a stack of letters two feet high, that nine out of every ten contained an application for work and that he sorely wished that Hoover had been reelected. The scramble to get aboard has many aspects. Witness, for example, the painful editorial contortions of the Washington *Evening Star*, owned by the Noyes clan. During the campaign no party organ hit Roosevelt and Garner below the belt oftener than did the *Star*. Moreover, the news reports of the Associated Press, of which Frank Noyes is president, became so prejudiced in Hoover's favor that a formal complaint was filed with the directors by Judge Bingham, publisher of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. But in addition to its smug self-righteousness, the Noyes tribe is celebrated for another trait—its passionate desire to be on good terms with the "ins." So now on every hand the *Star* is finding grounds to be optimistic about the incoming Administration. I solemnly predict that long before the nice little boys are firing Roman candles at their grandmothers on July fourth next, President Roosevelt will have no warmer defender than the *Star*. I also predict that White House dinner invitations will go out as usual. And since I have mentioned a local condition, let me add that there is one thing which President Roosevelt should do for this city: he should persuade General Glassford to resume charge of the police department long enough to smash the "Washington police ring" through which the present Administration operated to get Glassford out of office.

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WHAT is to become of the Republican Party? Is it to be reorganized by the same individuals who led it to disaster, or will new leaders appear? One thing largely responsible for the present sad state of the party is the fact that control has resided in the standpat faction while nearly all the brains have been in the insurgent branch. This should mean that reorganization will be intrusted to such men as Senators Norris, Cutting, and La Follette, but such a thing is unlikely for the simple reason that the real force behind the party has been the financial interests which used it to control the government. Some observers have suggested that Ogden Mills is the logical Republican candidate for 1936. I do not believe that Mills will ever make it. He has much ability within a limited field, but his supercilious manner and his plutocratic background are against him. He owns too many houses and boats, too many race horses. We are told here that his speeches lost votes for Hoover virtually everywhere he appeared. He has no conception of how the ordinary man thinks. But his greatest handicap will be the Hoover curse. Regardless of what group or faction gains control of the party machinery, it is a certainty that the first task will be to weed out everything which might remind the voters of Hoover. Some of the smart lads are saying that the man to watch is the Honorable Jim Wadsworth, Representative-elect from New York. His willingness to return as a Congressman after having been Senator made a good impression. Of course, it is not outside the realm of possibility that before another Presidential year arrives our economic system will have crashed, and that we shall have been compelled to junk the politicians and turn for leadership to those who really know what it is all about.

The Lion House

By LESLIE NELSON JENNINGS

Roused from their lethargy, the lions roared
And the crowd surged, half hypnotized with dread,
Against the paling for its due reward—
To watch the sleek-flanked lions being fed.
Spilling the dirty water in their pans,
They snarled and fought and tore at the red meat,
Ransomed from their imprisonment by man's
Compassion for the jungle in defeat.

What shall it profit us who yet go free?
Here, even here, there is no lack of food.
Such is the privilege of captivity :
The torpors of repletion. . . . Still I stood
Searching the eyes of those who came to see
This thing called hunger, who had found it good.

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Dissenting Opinion*

Scottsboro

I AM happy that the Scottsboro boys are not to hang. But I am shocked at the Supreme Court's decision. It saved lives, but at terrible cost. The court was devious and, it seems to me, cunningly uncourageous.

Three points were raised in the appeal: (1) there was not a fair, impartial, and deliberate trial; (2) the boys were denied the right of counsel; and (3) qualified Negroes were systematically excluded from the jury. Points one and three had deep social significance. The court disregarded them, not by a declaration of opinion on the facts or the law, but by the telltale and too light phrase: "The only one of the assignments which we shall consider is the second in respect of the denial of counsel."

The dissenting judges, with some justification, accepted this evasion of the majority. Dissenting Justice Butler wrote: "The court, putting aside—they are utterly without merit—all other claims that the constitutional rights of petitioners were infringed, grounds its opinion and judgment upon a single assertion of fact."

Where were Brandeis, Cardozo, and Stone when this dissent was read in chambers? "Without merit" was too strong to be disregarded. Other black boys are being tried every day by lily-white juries.

Their silence on the real issues leaves the record in horrid shape. And the one issue decided has little importance. Our liberal justices were out-traded. Mr. Justice Sutherland did a good job. The only point decided—and the court limited the decision on purpose, I suppose—was the following:

"Where a defendant is unable to employ counsel and is incapable adequately of making his own defense because of ignorance, feeble-mindedness, illiteracy, or the like, it is the duty of the court to assign counsel."

It is an empty and meaningless victory. What if little Wems is now assigned a half-hearted advocate who will saunter through a new trial before a white jury while mobs outside sing anthems and shout for hangings? The majority decision declares: "Attorneys are officers of the court and are *bound* to render service when required by such appointment." (Italics mine.) (See Cooley, "Constitutional Limitations.") But what kind of service do bound men supply? Page the lawyers of the Scottsboro bar and require one of them to appear for the defense at the new trial. That would hardly help Wems. Let it be said to the credit of Southern barristers that they cannot be forced to defend earnestly causes they do not favor.

I have no sympathy for the Southern bar's prejudice against constitutional trials for Negroes. But it is probable that in the long run the bar and justice will be better served by lawyers who flout the Supreme Court's quotations from Cooley on constitutional law than by those who accept with submerged conscience either side of any cause.

MORRIS L. ERNST

*Under this head Morris L. Ernst will contribute frequent comments on current issues and events.—EDITOR THE NATION.

In the Driftway

THE Drifter has decided that Something Ought to Be Done to suppress the smile promoters. For the smile which is the shy and quiet daughter of Old Man Laughter is too precious a human possession to be made odious by being vulgarized and commercialized. The smile promoters have been at work until it has become hard to find a face in a magazine or street-car advertisement which is anything but a row of teeth between a pair of parted lips. But this autumn the propaganda reached new proportions in the elections and in the launching of a National Smile Contest. The political campaign was made sad not more by the flapdoodle that was talked than by the fact that no candidate for anything from President to pound master was pictured in the newspapers except with his face distorted in a hilarious grin. The photographers just wouldn't press their bulbs until their victim took the pose of a laughing jackass. Even Prexy Hoover had to capitulate toward the last and show a sickly smirk. The Drifter found relief in those days by turning to the sporting pages, where football gladiators were still portrayed with visages upon which was written a hymn of hate the like of which no doughboy ever bore over the top.

* * * * *

THE National Smile Contest was organized apparently in the interest of portrait photographers. Prizes to the number of 173 were offered as bait. "Maybe you have one of the 173 best smiles in the U. S. A.," read the advertisement of one studio. "Have a smiling picture taken—it will automatically enrol you in the National Smile Contest." A photograph of a young lady with a mouth like a tooth-paste advertisement bore the slogan: "What this country needs is a *Smile!*" What this country needs, retorted the Drifter, though he fears nobody heard him, is something to smile about.

* * * * *

THE Drifter doesn't know just when the cult of the smile began. A good deal of sentimental fiddle-faddle has been talked about it ever since he can remember, such as (he quotes from memory):

It's easy enough to be pleasant
When life goes along like a song,
But the man worth while is the man who can smile
When everything goes dead wrong.

But modern propaganda is based on the discovery that a smile is a *commercial asset*. With that, our morals makers undertook to "sell" smiling to the American public as something which would help one to "get on." Perhaps the first expression of this was the telephone advice: "The voice with the smile wins." Thus the smirk promoters were at work long before the national depression began, but the present concavity of industry has quickened their efforts.

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A SMILE was used for propaganda purposes in New York City many years ago without either cant or vulgarity by a philanthropic organization. A small boy afflicted with tuberculosis so that he had been strapped immovable

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with his back against a board managed, nevertheless, to smile into a camera's mouth so engagingly that his picture, with the caption "Smiling Joe," was widely used in appealing for funds. "Smiling Joe" must have been the best money-getter the society ever had. Nor is the Drifter forgetful of the way in which a brave sentiment of Beaumarchais has been made known to thousands of Frenchmen by its incorporation in the title device of the Paris *Figaro:* "I make haste to laugh at everything in order that I shall not have to weep over it." But all that is far removed from modern American smiles-promotion.

* * * * *

WHEN the Drifter assumes the dictatorship of the nitwitariat—it won't be long now—he will order the demobilization of all "No Smoking" signs, replacing them with placards reading: "Smiling Positively Prohibited. This Means You." Now smile that off!

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

The Scottsboro Decision

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: We should like to point out that your editorial on the Scottsboro decision, in your issue of November 16, is misleading. You state, without qualification, that "they [the Scottsboro boys] are to have a new trial under different circumstances from those surrounding the original one, when an atmosphere of hostility and race prejudice made a fair trial impossible."

It seems certainly an objective aid to the legal lynchers to make such a statement in the face of the announcement by Judge A. E. Hawkins, who presided over the original lynch-trials, that he would set the retrials in his own court for its next term, March, 1933, and that he would feel now more than ever called upon to demand military accompaniment to the trial; in the face of the fact that the prosecutor has announced that he will fight the change of venue which the International Labor Defense has announced that it will seek; in the face of the fact that the trial must be held in Alabama, where the white ruling class will certainly do its best to arouse mob antagonism to the Scottsboro boys in whatever county the trial is held.

Such a statement also ignores the class and national character of the case. The Scottsboro verdicts do not constitute an isolated case, but are typical of Southern and capitalist "justice." The Scottsboro case, like all cases of oppression, persecution, framing, legal and ordinary lynching in the South, is part of a deliberate campaign of national oppression of the Negro people and enforcement of slavery conditions in the South through terrorization of the Negro masses—part of the capitalist offensive against Negro and white workers, to prevent their growing unity in the class struggle.

The Scottsboro decision of the United States Supreme Court bases itself solely on a technicality. The only point sustained is that the Scottsboro boys were not permitted to obtain counsel. The contention that the court was merely an instrument of Southern lynch justice, the contention that the lynch-mob rule of Scottsboro, organized as it was by the white Southern landowning class and comprising within its organization the court itself, predetermined the lynch verdicts, was swept aside by the Supreme Court in its decision as of no material weight.

In this manner the Supreme Court decision becomes a set of instructions to the lower courts on how legally to lynch the Scottsboro boys, and other victims of class and national oppression, without violating the Constitution. By its dismissal of the contentions of the defense that a fair trial was impossible in Scottsboro and that it was illegal to exclude Negroes from the jury, it virtually tells the Scottsboro court, to which it returns the cases, that it can get away with murder so long as it observes the technical forms of court procedure.

The International Labor Defense not only intends to fight these cases, point by point and step by step, back to the United States Supreme Court if necessary; it also proposes to intensify the mass pressure against the lynch verdicts throughout the world. Without this intensification of mass pressure, which has forced the new trial, the case cannot be won.

You will understand, then, that such a misleading statement as that contained in your editorial becomes extremely harmful to the defense of the Scottsboro boys.

New York, November 15 LOUIS COLMAN,
Director, Publicity Department,
International Labor Defense

Pairing Votes

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As chairman of the National Socialist Campaign Committee, I have been shown a letter which appeared in your publication signed by Professor Paul Douglas, chairman of the Thomas for President Committee, in which Professor Douglas suggested that those wanting to vote for either Hoover or Roosevelt should pair their votes and vote for Thomas.

Lest there be some misunderstanding, I desire to state that the idea expressed by Professor Douglas was advanced without the knowledge or sanction of the Socialist Party, and that the party sought votes solely for the principles of socialism to which its candidates were committed. I shall therefore appreciate your courtesy in publishing this letter.

Milwaukee, November 15 DANIEL W. HOAN,
Chairman, Socialist National Campaign Committee

[The plan suggested by Paul Douglas in *The Nation* for November 2 is not quite accurately described by Mayor Hoan in the letter printed above. Mr. Douglas suggested that those "who would like to vote for Thomas but who are afraid to do so lest they should help elect Hoover" should pair their votes with others "who would like to vote for Thomas but who are afraid to do so lest they should elect Roosevelt." Thus paired, they could vote for Thomas without fear of the immediate effect.—EDITOR THE NATION.]

Styles for the Unemployed

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The letter signed "Good-for-Nothing," in *The Nation* of November 2, reminds me of a personal experience. Walking through a crowded park in a hard-hit industrial city, I was startled to hear my companion, a religious woman of good intentions, say: "I wouldn't give anything to *that* man; he is too ragged and unkempt. Anybody can keep clean and neat." Farther along our path she ejaculated: "Well, I wouldn't give anything to *that* man; he is too well dressed! A man with a fresh shirt and a tie can't be hard up."

Some periodical—*The Nation,* perhaps—ought to give us a weekly page of correct styles for the unemployed.

Oxford, Ohio, November 21 FRANCES G. RICHARD

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Suffering in the Mine Fields

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Readers of *The Nation* may wish to aid in alleviating the present intense suffering in the mine fields of southwestern Ohio, especially since the relief requested is administered under labor auspices. The picture down here is a sorry one. I have recently visited numerous industrial communities in the Middle West where unemployed citizens' leagues are functioning. In none of them have I witnessed such distress as exists in Belmont County. The Belmont County Relief Council, which has enrolled 6,400 unemployed in its ranks, is fighting to get money from the State for relief. In the meantime, it has taken over the operation of three coal mines, furnishing coal to all the unemployed in Meade township.

It has also set up a community tailor shop, and is remaking old clothes for the unemployed. This appeal is for such discarded clothing, which can be sent to William R. Truax, chairman, Belmont County Relief Council, Shadyside, Ohio.

Shadyside, Ohio, November 18 Louis Francis Budenz

Ergot and Ether

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: In our article Bad Drugs and the Law, which appeared in *The Nation* for October 19, we omitted for lack of space any discussion of the unprofessional position of the American Medical Association in the ergot-ether controversy and the ensuing hearings before a Senate committee. Instead of demanding the punishment of manufacturers of impure and illegal drugs and the removal of officials who had condoned illegal practices, the association put its full force behind a program of ridicule and denunciation intended to discredit every critic of the drug manufacturers, who help support the association by continuous, large-scale advertising in its periodicals.

Apparently the association's campaign on behalf of the drug manufacturers is still being continued. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says editorially in its issue of October 29:

> Under the title Bad Drugs and the Law, Arthur Kallet and F. J. Schlink in *The Nation* for October 19 consider three subjects—ergot, ether, and prescriptions. The article on ergot opens with this statement: "For an extra profit of half a cent, American drug manufacturers have helped dig the graves of thousands of women dead of hemorrhage in childbirth."
>
> Possibly—but not probably—more fantastic falsehoods have appeared in reputable magazines than the one just quoted. . . .

The editorial intimates that the charges made in the article were based on the careless acceptance of "preposterous and fantastic publicity." May we point out that the facts used and the conclusions reached in the article were based, not on publicity, but on a painstaking study both of the medical and pharmacological testimony against the manufacturers and of the evasive defense offered by the manufacturers and their supporters?

The editorial adds valuable evidence to that already available that the association is willing to jeopardize the public welfare by condoning the use of deteriorated ether falling below standards which the American Medical Association itself helped to establish. It implies that illegally sub-standard ether is quite harmless. From the point of view of a patient about to undergo a major operation, this is a dangerous assumption and one that a medical editor has no right to make. Witness, for example, the following from the New York *Times* of October 21: "Post-operative pneumonia probably results from the use of ether that has deteriorated, it was indicated yesterday in a paper by Dr. Walter L. Mendenhall, of the Boston University School of Medicine, at the Congress of Anaesthetists in session at the Hotel McAlpin."

Until the amount of impurity that can be tolerated in ether is definitely determined and rigorously limited in manufacture and official control, a consumer cannot be blamed if he objects to taking the personal risk involved in finding out whether ether below the legal standard is safe or not.

Arthur Kallett

New York, November 21 F. J. Schlink

Keen Disappointment

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Mr. La Guardia's defeat for reelection caused me keen disappointment. Congress has lost a strong, lively, energetic figure, and the people have lost a fearless fighter.

For the sake of many poor American citizens it is to be hoped that Mr. La Guardia's return to private life will be a short happy period of invigoration for a justified and honorable return to office.

Oakdale, Conn., November 11 Alice G. Connolly

Mutual Aid

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: We think your readers will be interested to learn of the League for Mutual Aid. This little-known organization aids its members in getting jobs and lends money without interest. An office with a competent secretary is maintained as a clearing-house for jobs. A revolving loan fund has been built up from returnable deposits and contributions from members. Loans are made without interest upon indorsements of members and friends. During the past year 250 jobs were filled and $13,500 was loaned. All this was done by a small organization of 600 members, operating on dues of $5 a year.

The emergency now upon us calls for extension of our work and vastly greater activity. Increased membership in the league is essential to our program of usefulness. We invite any of your readers who are interested to join with us, to report jobs they hear of, to avail themselves of our services, and to cooperate in all possible ways. The League for Mutual Aid is at Room 2004, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

New York, November 15 Ellen A. Kennan

Charles B. Stover

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: An association has been formed to conserve the memory of the late Charles B. Stover, one of the founders of the University Settlement and a pioneer in the field of outdoor recreation. It is proposed, provided there is sufficient material, to publish a volume commemorative of his life and activities.

To this end, it is requested of all those among his late friends and associates who find themselves in possession of any letters or other documents relating to him and to his public work to send copies of these to the undersigned, in care of University Settlement, 184 Eldridge Street, New York.

New York, November 16 J. K. Paulding

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Willa Cather: The Past Recaptured

By CLIFTON FADIMAN

DATES tell us that Willa Cather is the contemporary of Dreiser, Anderson, and Lewis. She received her first official recognition in 1922 when the Pulitzer Prize was awarded to "One of Ours." And it was about this time that the ascendancy of what is now the older generation of living novelists became a historical fact. Yet from this entire group Willa Cather has always stood somewhat apart. Their interests, their attitudes, were not hers. Her calm pulse did not throb in time with the hurried beat of the rebellious decade. The great post-war revolt against philistine values agitated her but mildly. The sex manifesto of Anderson and his followers apparently never reached her ears. In her thirteen books there is hardly a trace of the crusade against respectability waged by Mencken, Lewis, and Masters. Though deeply American in tradition and outlook, she has no report to make to us on the America of her time.

Let us commit no easy or ungenerous errors in the attempt to account for this. I am sure there is in her no conscious desire, stemming from fear or defeat, to evade the saliencies of her own period. Nor is Willa Cather, perhaps the least cynical of our important writers, impelled by any Cabellian disdain for the current scene. Yet it remains indisputable that—except in the case of "One of Ours," to which we shall revert—she has detached herself from contemporary interests. Though she has stirred her readers' hearts, she has never changed their minds. And that is essentially what most of her compeers have done.

Frequently a writer's influence can be gauged by the rapidity with which his followers popularize his ideas and ingest them into their daily conduct. Thus the critical attitude of Lewis begot the Babbitt-baiter. The amusing snobbery of Cabell produced the college-boy aesthete and fantast. Today we find the Hemingway pose reflected in the monosyllabic conversation of young journalists, or perhaps even in the iron-visaged small fry of Mr. Steig's inimitable drawings. But there have been no Catherians. We have read and admired her, but drawn nothing from her to make part of our own conduct. Whatever her influence may have been, it has not been "educational."

To understand this detachment, and particularly to understand the reasons for its recent intensification, we must grasp the basis of her mental outlook. Though its roots lie in the Nebraska prairies, it is Vergilian in its grace, its aversion to confusion and violence, its piety, its ancestor-worship, its moral idealism, its gentle stoicism, its feeling for the past, and its sense, touching rather than tragic, of the tears which lie in mortal things. There are lines of hers whose grave, simple sentiment and purity of rhythm actually echo the cadences of the more reflective passages of the Aeneid.

> For Ántonia and for me, this had been the road of Destiny; had taken us to those early accidents of fortune which predetermined for us all that we can ever be. Now I understood that the same road was to bring us together again. Whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past.

These sentences were composed in 1917. At that date Willa Cather's mind was already formed.

Of all conceivable temperaments the Vergilian is perhaps the least suited to portray an epoch like ours, darkly colored with brutal struggle and mass disaster. Only once has Miss Cather attempted an interpretation of a living issue. We need not be surprised that it was foredoomed to failure. Several of her books, notably "The Professor's House" and "My Mortal Enemy," merely miss their effect; only one is today quite intolerable. "One of Ours" is intolerable because, while its subject matter is large, its point of view is petty, or at best unsophisticated. This novel deals with two very serious things: the frustration of American youth and the war. To these tragic and many-rooted problems, calling for the sternest and most masculine analysis, Miss Cather brought a gentle Vergilian heart. She yearned over her silly, sulky boy, Claude Wheeler, striving to extract from the dull lead of his career the silver of tragic beauty. Today Claude merely annoys us; there is no other way of putting it.

The crucial test was Miss Cather's treatment of the war. She put her limitations on record in her eulogy of Claude: "He died believing his own country better than it is, and France better than any country can ever be. *And those were beautiful beliefs to die with.*" (Italics mine.) This note of regretful acceptance of an imperialistic carnage that left a mountain of bones on a hundred European battlefields implied in Miss Cather a simple inability to see her own time realistically. Even the Pulitzer Prize Committee must have known this to be true. It awarded the annual prize to "One of Ours" as the novel which "best presents the wholesome atmosphere of American manners and manhood." Miss Cather, perhaps unconsciously realizing that her talents were not adapted to a convincing interpretation of contemporary life, abandoned the field. She has not since returned to it, for "The Professor's House" is only in fact, not in spirit, a post-war novel.

"One of Ours" may be viewed as the only book Willa Cather ever wrote in accordance with a literary fashion. This revolt-from-the-village novel has acquired prestige from the authority of her name, but actually it is no better than similar books by Floyd Dell, Duncan Aikman, and others even less memorable. It were best forgotten, for it is by far different work that its author will live.

To classify the novels of Willa Cather is to make clear her remoteness from the problems which engaged most of

* The third of a series of articles by Mr. Fadiman on American novelists.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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her contemporaries. First there are the novels dealing with the Western pioneers of foreign birth or ancestry, and with the generation which directly followed them. Her finest works ("O Pioneers!," the first half of "The Song of the Lark," "My Ántonia," "A Lost Lady," and "Obscure Destinies") fall roughly into this class. Then there are those less successful novelettes, influenced by Edith Wharton and Henry James: "Alexander's Bridge," some of the stories in "Youth and the Bright Medusa," "The Professor's House," and "My Mortal Enemy." Possibly in reaction to the earthy simplicities of her Western novels, these treat isolated emotional conflicts in the lives of the well-bred. Finally, we come to the two recent novels—legends would be more correct—of outright withdrawal into a kind of dream history.

These three interests bound the field of her artistic activity. Reflect upon them and it becomes clear why, in satisfying them, Willa Cather has been led farther and farther away from contemporary life, deeper and deeper into the past. There is a way of treating the past so that it links with the present and illuminates our own lives. The novels of Evelyn Scott, for example, dynamic and forward-looking, have this power. Miss Cather's mind is basically static and retrospective, rich in images of fixed contours. Her evocation of the past can be beautiful and moving, and even at its most ethereal can transport us to a world of pleasant reverie. But few will affirm that it bears any relationship to our present-day conception of history.

One recalls at once Miss Cather's West, which she has made so wholly real that many have taken it to be wholly true. It is a West filtered through a very special and selective temperament. It is not false; it is merely partial. She decks her scene with a narrow range of good people—stoical, warm-hearted peasants, Christian souls like Alexandra and Ántonia and the mild, likable Ray Kennedy. Her business men are always gentlemen. Railroading is romantic—and it *was* romantic, no doubt, except that it was also other things. Although her finest book tells the story of a servant-girl, she prefers ordinarily to place her characters in comfortable middle-class surroundings. Thus "O Pioneers!" is not about pioneers at all, except for the first fifty (and best) pages. It deals with the second generation of prosperous farmers far removed from the sweat and toil and heartache which went into the conquest of the soil. In general, Willa Cather sees her West through a lovely haze, abstracting those qualities in people and even in landscape which lend themselves to her special idealistic bias.

Those who have studied the winning of the West in its less picturesque and Rooseveltian aspects may find little interest in Miss Cather's treatment. On the other hand, if one accepts her very special point of view, it cannot be denied that "The Song of the Lark" and "My Ántonia" are as moving today as when they were first published. No one has better commemorated the virtues of the Bohemian and Scandinavian immigrants whose enterprise and heroism won an empire. These books are safe for many years. Can one name another modern American novel whose emotional quality is so true, so warm, so human as that of "My Ántonia"?

Such books as these spring from their author's admiration for the quality of moral courage. But it is usually—and here too Miss Cather is at variance with her contemporaries—a moral courage acting in harmony with convention. It never takes up arms against the social order. The idealism which was so full and fruitful in "My Ántonia" shows its weaker side in a kind of reserve which of late has come perilously close to gentility. In part this may be due to Miss Cather's religious faith. Her allegiance limits the moral problems she may face and imposes upon her an attitude of submission. Catholicism lies quite openly at the heart of her last two novels. They are books from which the very idea of moral conflict is excluded. Not that there is any deliberate falsification of life in them—naturally, one does not expect moral struggle to enter very intimately into the lives of archbishops and fourteen-year-old girls—but they reveal a growing tendency to select from the great array of human emotions those which do not call up conflicts that are difficult to resolve. If this tendency is indulged, Miss Cather's remarkable and precious talents may end in a cul-de-sac; and we shall have to fortify ourselves against works of piety dressed up as novels.

It is perhaps in her treatment of the relationship between men and women that this emotional caution is most clearly revealed. When in 1915 "The Song of the Lark" was published, the Victorian compromise, at least in intellectual circles, had already broken down. But its hold, probably against the author's own will, was strong in this book, and has grown stronger in her later ones. When Miss Cather tries to project a vigorous male character she is hardly convincing. Fred Ottenburg is a case in point. By an overemphasis on his feats of eating and drinking and his general physical vitality, she tries to compensate for her inability to present him as a complete male. The love relationship between Fred and Thea is faded and unreal, though the opposite effect is intended. To tell the truth, the unspoken, non-sexual, half-unconscious love between Thea and Dr. Archie is, in comparison, warmly and vividly portrayed. Relationships of this order, loves from which the body is barred, are common in Miss Cather's writings: Jim Burden and Ántonia, Dr. Archie and Thea, Captain and Mrs. Forrester, Mrs. Forrester and Neil come readily to mind.

In "The Song of the Lark," Harsanyi, referring to Thea, says: "Her secret? It is every artist's secret . . . passion. It is an open secret, and perfectly safe. Like heroism, it is inimitable in cheap materials." Miss Cather's conception of passion is broad. It includes passion for one's work, one's children, one's friends, one's land, one's memories, and for beautiful objects and experiences. But it does not extend, except formally, to sex. There is something very oblique, sparse, over-delicate about her infrequent treatments of even the slightest sexual irregularity. This is not so true of her early work—"O Pioneers!" for example—but it has become increasingly evident. Her most recent stories are constructed so that such matters will not naturally intrude. The love affair in "Shadows on the Rock" has no more substance to it than a fairy-tale romance. Though Miss Cather cannot be accused of prudery, there is unquestionably in her a strong vein of puritan reticence. In a book like "My Ántonia" this may be transformed into an artistic virtue. But it can also too easily degenerate, as "Shadows on the Rock" shows, into mere sweetness and twilight.

The characteristic quality of Willa Cather's mind, however, is not its puritanism or its idealism, but something deeper in which these are rooted. She is preeminently an artist dominated by her sense of the past, seeking constantly,

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through widely differing symbolisms, to recapture her childhood and youth. A sort of reverence for her own early years goes hand in hand with her Vergilian ancestor-worship; and out of this has flowered her finest work. "My Ántonia" is one long gesture of remembrance. The most remarkable parts of "The Song of the Lark" describe Thea's childhood, especially her friendships with Spanish Johnny and Ray Kennedy. Once Thea reaches Chicago, she becomes the heroine of a novel. The more she triumphs as a mature artist, the less interesting she becomes as a personality. Only at the very end, when she returns to her childhood home to sing in church, the book suddenly breaks once more into beauty and reality. "A Lost Lady," too, owes much of its quiet emotional power to this same Vergilian quality of reminiscence. All her books are filled with throw-backs of the memory. Give one of her characters half a chance and he will begin to recall his youth. Pierre Charron in "Shadows on the Rock" says: "You see, there are all those early memories; one cannot get another set; one has but those."

Although this preoccupation with the past bore fruit in two beautiful and significant novels, it has also been responsible for Miss Cather's continuous diminution of vitality since "A Lost Lady." For while it is the fountain of her inspiration, it may also function as a chain limiting her freedom of movement. The greatest novelists, such as Proust, draw simultaneously from both worlds, that of the remembered past and that of the fully realized present. The purely retrospective artist is faced with a simple difficulty—his material begins to lack significance unless it is constantly renewed by contact and comparison with the life about him. Soon he may find himself telling the same story over and over again. This Miss Cather has not done, though she has frequently repeated characters. But once she had fully exploited her early Western recollections, there were only two courses open. She could go forward into the present—or she could retreat even farther, call history to her aid, break contact with contemporary minds, and evoke rather than create. She has taken the latter path, one hopes not irrevocably.

Somewhere Miss Cather speaks of "the world of the mind, which for most of us is the only world." It is a perilous phrase. That world of the mind can be a small or large one, depending upon the depth and frequency of its meetings with other minds. It may be a closed world or an open world. Of recent years Willa Cather has been pensively drawing the shades and fastening the shutters. It is quite true that her prose, considered solely as an instrument, has gained in precision and a certain minor poetry of phrase; but it has lost, many feel, some of the fresh morning vigor and warmth of her earlier work. In sheer power of invention the last two novels are inferior to her earlier ones. They have fewer characters, no changes of scene, no richness. "The Song of the Lark" is too long, but one has an admiring sense that it could easily have been longer, that the author had all she could do to keep a rein on her imaginative faculty. But in "Death Comes for the Archbishop" and "Shadows on the Rock" there is something precious, over-calculated. The effects are somehow parsimonious. Life is gently set in a sanctuary and viewed through a stained-glass window. They are, indeed, hardly novels at all, as we understand the word, but reworked legends, acceptable additions to the lives of the saints.

No one may dictate an artist's subject matter or his point of view. His own feeling for what is vital and important, his own sensitiveness to the forces which move his fellow human beings will point the road for him. There is a very real danger that Miss Cather may, quite simply, lose contact with life. Her hypertrophied sense of the past may permanently transport her to regions where minor works of art may be created, but major ones never. And this is a sad thing to contemplate, for the author of "My Ántonia" and "The Song of the Lark" was not a minor writer, but a major one. These books will remain classic in our literature and stir the imagination of Americans when her archbishops and her shadows have long vanished from memory.

Prelude

By CONRAD AIKEN

The picture world, that falls apart, and leaves
a snowflake on the hand, a splinter of ice,
a hillside, a red leaf

the picture world,
that lost and broken child's book, whence we keep
one picture, torn and soiled, the faded colors
precious because dimmed, clear because faded,
near because lost, whole because torn

the picture world that is ourselves, speaking
of yesterday and yesterday and yesterday,
the huge world promised in the bud of May,
the leaf, the stone, the rain, the cloud
the house of secret warmth where sleep was sweetest
the face most loved, the hand most clung to—

must we go back to this and have this always
remember what was lost or what was torn
replace the missing with a better dream
built from the broken fabric of our wills—
thus to admit our present is our past
and in one picture find unaltered heaven—

or, shall we be angelic, close brave wings,
fall through the fathomless, feel the cold void,
and sound the darkness of the newly known?—
—To face the terror in this rain that comes
across the drowned world to the drowning window;
be ignorant of rain, the unknown rain;
unknown and wild as the world was to god
when first he opened eyes—ah surely this
were nobler answer than the glib speech of habit,
the well-worn words and ready phrase, that build
comfortable walls against the wilderness:
seeing, to know the terror of seeing: being,
to know the terror of being: knowing, to know
the dreadfulness of knowledge:

Come, let us drown in rain,
cry out and drown in this wild single drop,
sound the pure terror on whistling wings, and find
in death itself the retrospective joy
held like a picture-book in a drowned hand.

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Books

A Modern Diogenes

Sketches in Criticism. By Van Wyck Brooks. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.50.

THERE are fifty essays in this book; they deal, ostensibly, with fifty themes, and yet they are, at bottom, always on the same theme, the theme with which Mr. Brooks's name has been associated since the appearance of "The Wine of the Puritans" more than two decades ago. That theme is the poverty of American culture; and whether Mr. Brooks's ostensible topic is Mark Twain, Henry James, Henry Adams, Bierce, Huneker, Upton Sinclair, or some more abstract topic, that is what he is always talking about: the poverty of American culture—the examples of it, the causes of it, and its possible cures.

Must not Mr. Brooks, then, always harping on the same note, be a tiresome writer? On the contrary, it seemed to me, reading these essays, that he was the most fascinating and readable of all our critics. So much controversy has circled around his central thesis, and the question of the justice of his judgments of individuals, that he has received considerably less attention than he deserves as a literary craftsman. He begins nearly every essay with some arresting sentence; he comes to immediate grips with his theme. More important than this minor excellence is Mr. Brooks's gift for crushingly apt characterization. What more telling short description could there be of Henry Adams than this: "He went through the world with the air of a deposed emperor, not quite knowing who had deposed him, or from what"? Who has better described those recent magazines "devoted to the propagation of secret writings—these curious efforts to communicate and at the same time obstruct communication, to court a public that is generally despised, to express and yet refrain from expressing, to substitute a cipher for a language"? And who has more accurately put his finger on the weakness of the whole movement that these magazines reflect—"a sterile aestheticism that substitutes the means of art for the end"?

If Mr. Brooks is a one-ideaed man, then he is one-ideaed in a very special sense—in the sense that Taine was, or Ruskin, or Matthew Arnold. It is not that he has only one idea, but that he has one central idea, which orients and unifies all his work, and gives it its influence and its force. He comes nearer than any other of our critics to exercising the function in present-day America that Arnold did in Victorian England. Throughout his work there runs a brave and passionate earnestness. Is the picture that he gives us of our literary life too gloomy, too pessimistic, as is so often charged? Is he, even if right in his facts and individual judgments, wrong in his emphasis? Are his portraits unfair because—if of nothing else—of some bilious principle of selection? Perhaps it is true that anyone who knew nothing of American literature but what he learned from Mr. Brooks's criticism would have an unjust notion of it. But no one is likely to be in that position. We will always have an oversupply of critics who can tell us the virtues of American literature, not to speak of the army who are constantly reading into it virtues that it never had. What we desperately need are gadflies, even sour-faced and insufferable fellows, if we can get no other kind—and Mr. Brooks is far from that—who will keep reminding us of its defects. Mr. Brooks differs from his more complacent colleagues by the simple fact that he will be satisfied with nothing less than greatness. Most of us, when we cannot get what we like, learn to like what we get; but Mr. Brooks will not content himself with the second-rate, and above all he will not begin to tell himself that the second-rate is the first-rate. Hence, with endless curiosity and patience, he examines one example after another of the diverted, the stunted, the blighted American literary career; he traces its causes in the dominance of money-making and industrialism, in our traditions of rootlessness, of "self-expression," of spontaneity, of false individualism, in the refusal of our writers humbly to subject themselves to masters and to undergo the discipline of a long and effortful apprenticeship before setting up as masters or even as journeymen on their own account. And while Mr. Brooks always sees the individual in his social context (none of our critics does this more consistently), and always recognizes the power of the economic forces that play upon him, he is never a mere fatalist or economic determinist; he is constantly insisting that the individual has the choice between timidity and courage, between prudence and creation. Not the least part of the force of his work comes from his insistence on this personal responsibility.

These essays bear no dates, and there is no prefatory note. A few of them, like the essay on Max Eastman, Science and Revolution, are obviously new; one or two—the essays on Upton Sinclair and Ambrose Bierce—appeared in "Emerson and Others" five years ago, though they seem to have been slightly revised; most of the others, perhaps, are from the files of the old *Freeman*. But none of them date, and the latest have the same tonic quality as the oldest.

HENRY HAZLITT

John D.

God's Gold. The Story of John D. Rockefeller and His Times. By John T. Flynn. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

THE praise bestowed on Mr. Flynn's life of the elder Rockefeller is rather puzzling in view of the book's many faults—the wretchedness of its style, the immaturity of its biographical technique, and the inconsistencies and weakness of its fundamental point of view. The life of Rockefeller is not one that has to be recounted in great detail. To the last generation "John D." was a household sobriquet. Two books, Henry Demarest Lloyd's "Wealth Against Commonwealth" and Ida Tarbell's equally famous history of the Standard Oil Trust, rehearsed the story of the means used by Rockefeller and his lieutenants in building their gigantic oil monopoly—the system of secret railroad rebates and drawbacks, of widespread espionage and intimidation of competitors, of competition by bogus independents, of the wholesale corruption of judges, legislators, and other public officials. Rockefeller became the most hated man in the country, although other industrialists pursued not dissimilar methods. Not even his incongruous piety explains his vilification, for most of the industrialists of his time were regular churchgoers. Doubtless popular fury was stimulated by his very silence in the face of attack, by his almost utter indifference to public opinion. It is true that since the advent of Ivy Lee he has attained a certain measure of benignity, but even this has been at a price. The great industrialist has been transformed into the dime-distributing sage of Pocantico Hills.

Mr. Flynn explains that he undertook his life of Rockefeller because the Lloyd and Tarbell volumes were attacks rather than biographies. Of Ida Tarbell's work he says also that it is rather a history of the Standard Oil Trust than a biography of Rockefeller. Mr. Flynn's book is clearly a defense of Rockefeller. If an attack invalidates a biography, then may not a defense? Moreover, Mr. Flynn's book is as much a history of Standard Oil as Miss Tarbell's. It is a "life and times" that has much more in it of the hero's times than of his life; this is, indeed, its greatest virtue. Rockefeller himself, the most silent of men, escapes his present biographer as he did his earlier critics,

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and remains that familiar caricature, "John D." Mr. Flynn does not so much project a portrait of Rockefeller as argue about him.

In dealing with the public career of Rockefeller, Mr. Flynn is more successful. The Civil War, which had destroyed the slave-holding aristocracy of the South, had ushered in the "new industrialism." The railroads were opening a vast continent teeming with natural resources, and there were no tariff walls to impede the natural flow of commerce. Neither were there burdensome legal restrictions, nor a cultural tradition to check the new forces of exploitation. Mr. Flynn recognizes the importance of these favorable conditions in the success of Rockefeller, but he insists that he was the leader of the new industrial revolution. He was not merely a strong, unscrupulous man avid for gain, who was favored above most of his contemporaries by fortune. He dreamed a dream of a new industrial empire. In his innermost soul he hated the disorder and waste of competition and resolved to build a new business system. "The man's mind," remarks Mr. Flynn in all seriousness, "craved order as the drunkard's blood craves alcohol"—a proposition that is as dubious in one part as in the other.

It is a more serious question whether Mr. Flynn has not glorified his subject beyond his just due. If most of the contemporary industrialists may be dismissed as mere tyros, it is not so easy to dispose of the claim of Carnegie to be considered the leader of the new industrialism. Steel was made as gigantic an industry as oil, and Carnegie proved himself an even better organizer than Rockefeller. The oil trust was built on a series of alliances among the outstanding oil magnates; and ultimately, when subjected to pressure, it collapsed. Carnegie knew that the only sure road to monopoly was to absorb or destroy his competitors. Even more completely than Rockefeller he controlled every part of the process of production in his industry. At the time of Rockefeller's retirement from Standard Oil, Carnegie was as rich a man. It must be remembered that Rockefeller's really great wealth came to him as a result of his investments after this period. In his second phase he was a mere money man, a type Mr. Flynn affects to despise. Finally, Carnegie was cleverer than Rockefeller in conciliating public opinion. A veritable Saint Andrew, his benefactions were not denounced as "tainted."

Above all, Mr. Flynn's biography is vitiated by its moral apologetics. Of course, he does not defend all Rockefeller's acts. That would be impossible. The point is rather that if Rockefeller is to be regarded as an industrial Napoleon it is idle to judge him by ordinary moral standards. Again, it is even more idle to subject to a process of ethical discrimination the host of industrialists who after the Civil War fastened themselves upon the national economy. They can only be regarded as brigands on a magnificent and awe-inspiring scale. The early attacks upon Rockefeller were made from the ethical viewpoint of the small business man. It is true that Mr. Flynn also argues that Rockefeller served his competitors only as they tried to serve him, without success; but he is not content with regarding as the whole of the ethical question the fact that monopoly is simply the logical end of competition.

On the other hand, Mr. Flynn fails most completely in facing the larger issues of such a career as Rockefeller's. In attempting to explain the variance between his hero's piety and his business methods he argues that he was led astray by Old Testament stories of deception, such as that of Jacob and Esau! He does not plumb the larger import of the bifurcation of religious and business ethics since the Reformation. Rockefeller may not have regarded religion as a useful social opiate, but this is not necessarily disproved by showing that Rockefeller was pious even as a youth. That has nothing to do with the institutional function of religion. Nor is the absence of ulterior motives in Rockefeller's benefactions necessarily proved by showing that he gave to the Baptist missions from the meager proceeds of his first job. There is not a word on the fundamental question of the justification of private charity.

As a phenomenon Mr. Flynn's book is highly interesting. His attempt to canonize one of the greatest servants of big business marks its new respectability. As a journalist whose primary interest has been business, Mr. Flynn has been worried by some of its excrescences. His previous book, "Graft in Business," was obviously based upon a highly ethical premise. But the ultimate morality of industrial capitalism, as of any system, lies in its ends, not its means. The life of the elder Rockefeller has its justification only in a Nietzschean system of ethics.

WILLIAM SEAGLE

Lost Frontier

Earth Horizon. An Autobiography by Mary Austin. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

AT intervals in the march of history certain great moments come. The inspiration of the crusades probably provided one of them; the French Revolution another; the recent Russian Revolution a third; and the conquest of the American continent one of the most satisfying. At these moments men and women are called upon to do battle with gigantic forces; their hands, their minds, their muscles, the whole total of their energies must contribute to the magnificent task of making, under certain given circumstances, a civilization. The men and women who went out from Kentucky to Illinois a century ago were participants in this supremely soul-filling task. The women came from gentler homes, many of them from plantations rich with slave labor; they brought with them to the wilderness a half-dozen kitchen utensils, a couple of their best quilts, and their courage. With these tools they made a home while their husbands planted the prairies; they baked, wove, spun, milked, pitched hay, and bore and raised their children, and the fruits of their labors lay about them in abundance when their time came to die.

But for their daughters and sons and for their grandchildren they left—what? The prairies were conquered; the black land lay fresh to the plow; the one-room cabins of the pioneers had been replaced by commodious farmhouses which took on every modern device for lessening labor as soon as it appeared. Families of ten and twelve gave place to families of two or three. And the young men and women of the late nineteenth century, newly sprung from college, actually refused the blessings their grandsires had labored gloriously to create for them. The world, in other words, was conquered and was theirs. But alas, the joy lies not in owning but in getting. And that joy they could not know.

Women with the rushing energy that was Mary Austin's, and with her need to create, since they could not be their pioneering great-grandmothers, turned to the world of the mind for their conquest. They demanded equal rights, prohibition, suffrage, birth control. This was not enough for Mrs. Austin, because she was already of a more triumphant mentality than they. She turned to the world of the spirit, and laid her conquering hands upon it. She has prescience; she sees the dead; she walks with God; she knows the true nature of prayer. Let me be understood. I say these things in all deference. I suspect that Mrs. Austin is a truly great woman. But she is out of her milieu. She should have been born while a world was being made. And then how grandly she would have done her share!

What she has done is to be faithful to her idea of the American pattern, and she has nursed it and fed it devotedly all her life, so that under her ministrations it does seem here

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and there to be emerging. She has, in her own words, written of "the totality which is called Nature," given herself "to the quality of experience called Folk, and to the frame of behavior known as Mystical." She has done these things not only in her autobiography but in the whole long list of her books, so that anyone who wishes to know Mary Austin must read them all. But even from the autobiography the pattern she saw for her own life is plain, and that she saw it at all makes the book worth reading, if it were not valuable for other reasons. It is, in fact, part of the saga of America, as that saga will be written at last by many Americans. Here it is written often with more strength than grace, with more truth than clarity. But I have a notion that as a record of the frontier and what remained after the frontier was gone it will seem illuminating for some time to come.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

The Rossettis at Home

The Wife of Rossetti. By Violet Hunt. E. P. Dutton and Company. $4.

ALL of us remember Floyd Dell's Bohemia of recent death. We remember the rush of boys and girls to Greenwich Village, an emigration by scores and hundreds from the Pacific West, the Middle West, New England. Of these, we remember the girls especially; they were tall and wore long skirts or draperies of brightly colored batik or calico, and sandals on bare feet. This type was an imperfect memory of life imitating art and was something that resembled a Bohemian tradition. Its origin dates back more than a half century, back to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in Victorian London, back to the sacred inner circle of the group, until at last we see "The Blessed Damozel," "Beata Beatrix," the white throat, fiery hair, Elizabeth Siddal, the wife of Rossetti.

Violet Hunt's book is not biography, or fiction. It is family gossip raised to the level of a fine art, and every word of it is exciting gossip, screaming: "Elizabeth Siddal committed suicide and we know the reasons why." The book sets a headlong, crazy pace, and we are propelled into the very center of the Pre-Raphaelite group, all dead these many years, but now alive, talking, shouting one another down. The flow of talk is turgid, yet swift; one feels that many of the facts are knocked askew, but that the essential truths are being told for the first time. The book is not merely another history of the Pre-Raphaelite movement; it is the movement itself; and Violet Hunt is spokeswoman, telling you all she has overheard to the last murmur.

Restore Charles Dickens's London, the London of "Oliver Twist," and you have the setting for the first scene. The streets are crowded and dark, and the stench of the river is in one's nostrils. Turn corners into Cranbourne Alley and there find a milliner's shop, a haven for young men and old, or anyone at all who has an eye for pretty girls. No doubt Miss Hunt exaggerates the lack of modesty displayed by young milliners. We are to remember that these are the "lower classes," and that a young man with pocket money is king among them. There were four such young men: William Allingham, Walter Deverell, Ford Madox Brown, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the original P. R. B. They were poor, but their poverty was the rather special poverty of poets and artists who came from the middle classes. The girls were to be converted to a sacred cause, the cause of art, and their services paid for by a night's lodging or a warm supper. Some trouble was taken to secure the right model. It was William Allingham, the poet, who saw Elizabeth Siddal first, and at first glance must have remembered "La Belle Dame Sans Merci." The next was Walter Deverell, who had a woman's eye for beauty, and was so girlish himself that he could approach women with a superior air of detachment, and even the shyest of girls would have no fear of him. It was he who first captured her and locked her up in his studio. The girl's restraint, her wide-eyed chastity, met the approval of Walter's mother, who footed Walter's expense account. Walter was delighted with his find; but it was not long before his friend Dante Gabriel stepped round to see the marvel, and carried off the prize.

It is clear that Miss Hunt hates Dante Gabriel and enjoys patronizing Elizabeth Siddal—but their story is in her blood; and in the telling the very slang of the period is revived. Elizabeth is a cold "stunner," but the poor dear is quite without education and ill, T. B. of course, ready to die at any moment. And Gabriel is a cad, one of those rascals who would walk off with your Sunday trousers. He had already borrowed Brown's, who, poor man, was forced to walk out of doors with a blanket round his loins. Fortunately, Brown was in the country and no one saw him except his wife and a peasant or two. Meanwhile Miss Siddal was living in Rossetti's flat at 14 Chatham Place, up four floors and overlooking the river. She saw no one. She read, slept, drew, and wrote poetry. Whenever Gabriel appeared she would be ready, would sit twenty-four hours at a stretch, as long or as short a time as he demanded. The sacrifice of her life was complete, yet she remained chaste, withdrawn—it was plain that she was holding out for marriage. It was a long battle, and finally Rossetti capitulated. The habit of sacrifice had grown so strong that the flat at Chatham Place became a prison. She had given so much that Rossetti could not escape her. She was rejected by his family. Christina would have nothing of her.

The yellow fog rolled in from the river. Doctors suggested that Mrs. Rossetti move. Irregular meals, bad food, inarticulate quarrels, illness, drugs—all these were part of daily life at Chatham Place. One could see at a glance that such a household was headed for disaster. Hear Miss Hunt describe the two central figures. First, there is Gabriel, "a man now, grave, bluff, and sensible, watch-chain looped on opulent waistcoat: to look at, Allingham said, something like a prosperous citizen of Genoa"; then his wife, "bitter, thinning, with shrunk bosom and eyes more prominent than ever; together they must exist in that doomed house until her time came."

It was inevitable that Gabriel sought out other women, but these were all variations of the original Siddal model; more buxom, the arms and thighs heavier. Elizabeth's sacrificial madness was approaching a climax. She was much too ill to have children, yet she persisted in the attempt. Each effort drained her; sickness and horror became established as part of the Rossetti routine, and quarrels mounted in a crescendo. Into this last chapter of events little Swinburne entered; it was he who shared the last dinner with the Rossettis at a restaurant. There was the usual quarrel, and after the ride home (Swinburne left behind), voices on the stairway leading to the flat. Suddenly Gabriel came out and a door slammed. Darkness. The next morning, after a frenzied effort to revive the woman, Ford Madox Brown discovered a note hidden in the folds of her dress: "My life is so miserable I wish for no more of it." He put the slip of paper in his pocket. The coroner's jury turned in a verdict of accidental death caused by an overdose of laudanum, and Gabriel, erect, outwardly cool, reserved his show of emotion for a final grand gesture: his book of poems, all in manuscript (and carefully memorized by his friends), was placed with the still body in the coffin.

Violet Hunt has written an extraordinary book; a curiosity, if you will, but one of large implications. All that we need to know of Bohemia lies between its covers; the hysteria, the violent prose (it is possible that Miss Hunt herself has much in common with her characters), the whirlwind of gossip following in the trail of Bohemian activity, are preserved here for future historians.

HORACE GREGORY

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So—?

An "Objectivists'" Anthology. Edited by Louis Zukofsky. Publishers: To. $1.

IN February, 1931, the magazine *Poetry* was given over to a new school of poets, the objectivists. This anthology is a collection of poems of that same school. The definition of the word "objectivists" is to be gathered from the editor's lines:

> The melody, the rest are accessory—
> . . . my one voice; my other . . .
> An objective—rays of the object brought to focus,
> An objective—nature as a creator—desire for what is objectively perfect,
> Inextricably the direction of historic and contemporary particulars.

The introduction to the anthology, after so defining the school, goes on to state that Ezra Pound is the most important poet of today, that T. S. Eliot and his influence are much to be questioned, that the contributors to this volume "did not get up one morning all over the land and say 'objectivists' between toothbrushes."

Included are poems by Basil Bunting, Mary Butts, Frances Fletcher, Robert McAlmon, Ezra Pound, Carl Rakosi, Kenneth Rexroth, Charles Reznikoff, William Carlos Williams, Louis Zukofsky, Forrest Anderson, T. S. Eliot (Marina, a poem already out in pamphlet form), and a few others. The book closes with the Program for the Objectivists.

The poems by Pound are deliberate and skilful nonsense; those by Williams, very like his usual vein; and Eliot's contribution, of course, is a poem already well known. We are very probably wrong in feeling that the poems of the group as a whole are not very far away from imagist technique; they seem overstrained to include not only the presentation of the material object, but also all the floating images of the subconscious. Frankly, despite the obvious passionate sincerity of the poets, despite some very excellent passages in the longer poems, despite the elaborately obscure introduction, we do not make much of all this, nor quite see what is to be gained by this rather diffuse (despite its program of economy) and certainly very personal and disconnected presentation of the subject matter of poems. We are told, however, that such poems proceed from "desire for what is objectively perfect, inextricably the direction of historic and contemporary particulars."

EDA LOU WALTON

What Is Art?

Art and Artist. By Otto Rank. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

DR. RANK, one of the best known of practicing psychoanalysts, is convinced that "the new psychology" has so far done little to illuminate the problem of the artist, but after an evidently extensive study of recent literature concerning primitive art, he emerges with some bold theories of his own. Only an anthropologist could profitably undertake to judge the value of the evidence which he deduces from the activity of primitive peoples, but his theories, considered merely as theories, are eminently worth the consideration of all who are interested in the problems of aesthetics. Dr. Rank's ideology is in many respects novel, and, indeed, his whole approach is quite different from any with which the literary critic is familiar, but that very fact makes his speculations all the more interesting when one begins to realize how much of what he has to say seems to lead by an unfamiliar route to the very conclusions toward which more than one critic has found himself slowly driven.

Since Aristotle's time it has been pretty generally assumed that some imitation of some nature is the starting-point of all art, and that the creative activity of the artist consists in the modification which he introduces into his image of the world outside. Most disputes center about the importance of the extent to which he is true to nature, and most of the dilemmas arise out of the difficulty of explaining just why or how the imitation becomes superior to the thing imitated. But Dr. Rank insists, in effect, that art has only recently come to resemble nature at all, and that the fundamental impulse behind it is not only separate from but actually opposed to the impulse to familiarize oneself with natural objects. Thus he provides us with an unusual approach to the problem which confronts the modern artist, whom he sees as compelled to seek some sort of compromise between the very old impulse to art and that relatively much newer impulse to knowledge from which the most primitive artists were almost wholly free.

As Dr. Rank shows, it has long been recognized that the intention behind the earliest known sculpture was in no sense imitative. The thing which the artist strove to represent was usually some abstract conception of the relation between his soul and the soul of the universe. Arguing from this point, Dr. Rank insists that art is originally concerned with the effort to assert the reality of things not present in the world of nature at all, or, as he puts it, with the effort "to render concrete by pictorial representation that which is thought and is spiritually real." Assuming still further that all the arts spring from the same fundamental need, he sees poetry as well as sculpture arising out of this impulse and hence, like sculpture, originally an expression of ideas rather than, in any sense, a record of observations or events. Carving begins to resemble natural objects and poetry begins to deal with partially realistic events only after knowledge of nature has introduced the possibility of criticizing abstract ideas by comparing them with natural fact, and at that point begins the conflict in the artist, who has hitherto been concerned only with objectifying the abstract ideas common to him and his society.

On the basis of this conception, Dr. Rank proceeds to divide the history of the artist into three periods. In the first, or primitive, period the artist works purely in a more or less fixed tradition of abstraction. In the second, or classical, period he is still in harmony with society, but man has reached the point where his familiarity with nature is sufficient to compel him to seek his idea *in* nature, and accordingly the task of the artist comes to be the task of creating those idealizations of man and natural objects which combine a recognizable representation of fact with the idea of what that fact ought to be. Finally there is the romantic period—extending from the beginning of the Renaissance to the present day—which is marked by the complete separation of the artist from society and by his effort to set up a private interpretation of the world which is intended to be different from either the world as it is ordinarily seen or the world as it is ordinarily imagined to be.

Speaking of the modern "artist-type" Dr. Rank writes:

> Our psychological knowledge of the type begins only with the Renaissance; and there already it denotes—artistically, sociologically, psychologically—something different, which we can only conjecturally assume in the artists of earlier epochs. *Psychologically,* the notion of genius, of which we see the last reflection in our modern artist-type, is the apotheosis of man as a creative personality; the religious ideology being thus transferred to man himself. *Sociologically,* it meant the creation of "genius" as a type, as a culture factor of highest value to the community, since it takes over on earth the role of the divine

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> hero. *Artistically,* it implies the individual style—which is already free and autonomous in its divine creating power and which is creating new forms out of itself. This artist, liberated from God, himself become God, soon overleaps the collective forms of style and their abstract formulation in aesthetics and constructs new forms of an individual nature, which cannot, therefore, be subsumed under laws.

The concern of this review being largely literary, we may not only leave Dr. Rank's anthropology to anthropologists, but we may also leave to psychologists his discussion of the relation between the neurotic and the modern "artist-type." Nevertheless, it seems highly probable that his theories about the nature of art do correspond to some reality which we are only beginning to understand, and which is destined to play a larger and larger part in all discussions of the aesthetics of literature. Undoubtedly some sort of crisis has been reached in this branch of speculation, and the conventional romantic as well as the conventional naturalistic attitude has been attacked from too many different angles not to be evidently unsatisfactory. All the popular isms—the Marxian, the humanistic, the metaphysical, the psychological, and all the rest—tend to converge at least to the extent that all recognize the inadequacy of both the "storm and stress" theories of the romantic and the comfortable, common-sense theories of the nineteenth century, which assumed that art was going to "advance" continuously by becoming a more and more scientifically detached account of the world of nature. Theorists who agree in nothing else agree in assuming that "art" differs in some radical way from mere "imitation." They agree that it is governed by laws which are somehow its own, and that it achieves values which are distinctly different in kind from those of science or sociology. And when all agree upon the need for some deeper understanding than we have of art as the product of a special activity of the human mind, we may assume that the need is really there. Dr. Rank's book throws something which looks very much like light from an unexpected quarter.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Dynamic Geography

Van Loon's Geography. Written and illustrated by Hendrik Willem van Loon. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.

VAN LOON is not the first to rescue geography from the dull and static discipline of less than a generation ago. J. Russell Smith, Isaiah Bowman, and Virgil M. Hillyer have in various ways pioneered before him. But Van Loon invests geography with a new interest and thrill. Nowhere has the interplay of geography and history been made more graphic; nowhere has the relationship of man to his physiographic environment been expressed more vividly; nowhere has the traditional exposition of the configuration of the earth's surface been so ably raised to the fourth dimension by the inclusion of sea bottom, stratosphere, and time's geologic, as well as man-made, transformations.

The style sparkles with simile, epigram, and gentle irony. Cordova is described as "the famous Moorish capital that used to boast of no less than 900 public baths before the Christians captured it and reduced the population from 200,000 to 50,000 and the public baths from 900 to 0." The unique combination of excellent climate, mountain ranges running obligingly in the right direction, navigable rivers, good harbors, fertile soil, and abundance of raw materials, which makes "America the most fortunate of all" lands is admirably set forth. Van Loon writes:

> It was practically uninhabited when the white man arrived . . . (only 10,000,000 Indians on the whole continent) and there was therefore no teeming native population to prevent the invaders from doing whatever they pleased to do or to interfere seriously with the development of the country according to the white man's plans. As a result America has no serious race problem except the unfortunate ones of its own making.

Contrasting the ruthless destruction by some peoples of the resources which nature has been working millions of years to accumulate with the failure of other peoples to utilize their natural resources at all, Van Loon thus concludes his chapter on Denmark, Norway, and Sweden:

> There are countries in which Man has submitted to the dictates of Nature until he has become her abject slave, and there are countries where Man has destroyed Nature so completely that he has lost touch with that great living mother who forever must remain the beginning and the end of all things. And finally there are those where Man and Nature have learned to understand and appreciate each other and have agreed to compromise for their mutual benefit. If you want an example of the latter, go north, young man, and visit the three Scandinavian countries.

The volume is filled with fascinating odds and ends of pertinent information. We learn how the first maps were made, why nautical miles are called "knots," the origin of the ship's "log," why the Swiss yodel. The hundred or more illustrations and maps contribute to giving Van Loon's geography its remarkable vividness.

ERNEST GRUENING

Treachery—and Destiny

Josephus. By Lion Feuchtwanger. Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir. The Viking Press. $2.50.

FOR Feuchtwanger's talent no character could be more apt and fertile than Josephus. It is a talent not really interesting in its power to depict merely personal emotions, but illuminating and important when it deals with what we may call the political emotions. In this it is suited to the tradition of the historical novel, the genre which best presents the feelings of people who are motivated chiefly by their allegiance to great ideas or historical forces. Josephus's life was complicated greatly by such motives and Feuchtwanger sets it forth brilliantly.

Save for the erotic incidents, he has had to invent little. The salient events of the novel may be found in Josephus's "Autobiography" and his "History"—his royal and priestly descent, his precocity at the university, his Essene asceticism before he joined the Pharisees, his mission to Rome to free the priests imprisoned by Nero, his political rise in Palestine, his defection from the Jews to the Romans, that strange and complicated treachery. In his autobiography Josephus implies his own complexity pretty clearly, and it was left for Feuchtwanger only to develop the implications. This he does largely in psychological terms, but the contradictions of Josephus's career were not essentially psychological; the fundamental determinants of his actions were the historical forces he so clearly perceived.

His tragedy was that of an essentially good man who must choose between a victorious power he despised and a defeated nation he loved. He lived at a time when men had to adjust their lives to basic political contradictions. National loyalties were dissolving in the inundation of Roman power, and no intelligent Jew who understood the power of Rome could hope for Palestine. The wiser of the rabbis could solve this dilemma of despair by withdrawing from their nation to devote themselves to canonizing the Law. Josephus's rival, the historian Justus, was willing to die with the nation. But Josephus, though he despised the rawness of Rome's power, saw that it was the visible and tangible future, which is hard to reject. It was not personal cowardice but rather a compliance with history that made him,

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after he had offered heroic resistance to the Roman legions, trick the intransigent remnant of his men into death and save himself by flattering Vespasian with a prophecy of the imperial purple. The tragedy was that the historically victorious were the brutal and debased.

It is not possible to follow here the further complications of Josephus's career. After a period of humiliation he becomes a favorite of Vespasian. When Titus sets out on a punitive expedition against Jerusalem, Josephus accompanies him to record for posterity the fall of the city. He watches in a torture of misery the awful suffering of his people and the fall of the temple, but he notes it all on the gold tablets Vespasian had given him. With terrible emotions he forces himself to watch the triumph accorded to Titus, sees his former associates led to slavery or execution, and then, when he has recovered from the collapse that follows, sits down to his history, a man whom the contradictions of Rome and Jerusalem, as well as of heroism and treachery, have exhausted.

With none of the vulgarity that usually attaches to "modernization" the book brilliantly illumines antiquity by its assumptions of the motives and forces of today. So much of it is pointed historical analogue that one cannot help looking for apologue as well. None emerges, however, save that which lies implicit in any novel which can represent politics as emotionally and philosophically important. LIONEL TRILLING

Marxism in Literature

The Liberation of American Literature. By V. F. Calverton. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.75.

V. F. CALVERTON'S "The Liberation of American Literature" has the faults and virtues of its method. Because he has a definite social point to prove—that all American writers have been conditioned by their environment and by their cultural inheritance from a Lollard, shopkeeping England, the latter predominating in early days and throughout the nineteenth century in the East as the "colonial complex," while the open environment generally shaped the literature of the Middle and Far West—Calverton is compelled to select only such elements in various figures as tend to fall within his contours. If this is praiseworthy in Parrington, it is certainly praiseworthy in Calverton; the fact that Calverton says "petty bourgeois" where Parrington said "democrat" does not destroy one and exalt the other. As a matter of fact, the Marxian terminology, which Calverton consistently—too consistently for grace—employs, can be precisely equated with the Jeffersonian icons of Parrington's speech. Alter the phraseology of "The Liberation of American Literature," discount the final chapter as an elaboration of a wish-fulfilment—and you have a book that is as American as "Main Currents in American Thought." The groundwork for Calverton's book was, in fact, laid by Professor Frederick Jackson Turner in his famous paper of 1893 on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." "The Liberation of American Literature" thus falls into line with the work of the post-Brooksian critics—Constance Rourke, Bernard De Voto, Hartley Grattan—all of whom look upon the influence of the frontier as a vitalizing force. Calverton definitely sees the literature of America being transformed by the "frontier force," which swept back from the prairies and the ranges to kill the colonial complex. But the pessimism that was a reflex of increasing industrialism—an industrialism which lifted the upper bourgeoisie (Parrington would call it the plutocracy) into the saddle, and tossed the petty bourgeoisie under the hoofs of the horse—followed the closing of the frontier, and we arrive at Constance Rourke's conclusion: that defeat at last had become a part of the national portion. Calverton interprets

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this defeat as meaning an inevitable proletarian revolution—and the liberation of American life. Whether Parrington would have come to this opinion is conjectural, although we know he sympathized with Daniel De Leon, Eugene V. Debs, and Victor Berger.

I have stressed the parallel between Calverton and Parrington simply because there is a prevalent notion that to be "Marxian" in literary criticism is somehow to be unintelligent, while to be Jeffersonian is an open sesame to the Pulitzer prize for historical writing. Certainly the Marxian approach is a valid approach; we do have three classes in society, and there is no objection to analyzing literature for its class content in terms of these divisions. The Marxian approach yields its own historical insights. In Calverton's hands it leads to an admirable analysis of why the pre-Civil War South, for example, was a Sahara of the Bozart. Calverton is especially good at weighing the impact of such books as "The Religious Backgrounds of American Culture" upon our notions of the wherefores of American literature; a keen forager among sociological doctrine, he is admirably qualified to give this doctrine its content in terms of literary significance. But that is as far as the method employed in writing such books as "The Liberation of American Literature" and "Main Currents in American Thought" goes.

It is in the matter of individual judgments that the method leads Calverton astray. Determined to find one good proletarian writer in the America of the muckrake period, Calverton fastens upon Jack London. London wrote books, such as "The Iron Heel," designed to make proletarian converts, but this is not enough for Calverton. "Had [London] stopped where most of his contemporaries did, and taken his stand upon an individualistic base . . . in all likelihood he would have been driven into the camp of the pessimists." As a matter of record, London became one of the most completely pessimistic of Americans—and this long after he had joined the Socialist Party. Again, Calverton objects to Sinclair Lewis's "materialistic" conception of Utopia, explained facetiously in a *Nation* piece about Mr. Lorimer and Me. The objection to capitalism, I had always thought, is that it does not provide a "materialistic" Utopia. And when Calverton talks of Hawthorne as being "not American," those who have known the Puritan conscience as a vivid American reality will be aghast at the narrow Calvertonian definition of the term. Similarly with Emerson's verse—which is certainly "American" if Pope's couplets are "English." One wonders what Calverton would have to say of Emily Dickinson's verse, which, by the way, he leaves out of the discussion.

Finally, it must seem that Calverton's desire to see a literature which will be evidence of the growth of revolutionary sentiment leads him to fantastic conclusions, both at the end of his chapter on The Southern Pattern and at the close of the book. In The Southern Pattern Calverton cites DuBose Heyward, Julia Peterkin, and Paul Green to prove certain points—but makes no relevant mention of Faulkner, Elizabeth Roberts, Thomas Wolfe, Erskine Caldwell, Isa Glenn, Ward Greene, or William March, all of whom would seem to constitute "a forward-looking tendency" in Southern literature. At least they show that life in the modern South is pretty terrible—which ought to be "forward-looking" enough for a revolutionist who wants to prove that such is the case under the dispensation of Herbert Hoover. And in the final burst of enthusiasm which constitutes Liberation, the ultimate chapter, Calverton overemphasizes the importance of John Dos Passos, Michael Gold, and Charles Yale Harrison. These are all fine writers in their various ways (I, personally, have a particular relish for Dos Passos), but to emphasize them at the expense of other writers who have "surrendered" to pessimism is to be a bad revolutionist. After all, the "liberation of American literature" implies the liberation to be a pessimist. If one has to base one's hopes for revolution on an optimism that will not be justified until one's grandchildren have reached their majority, it will not lead to the making of many revolutionists, no matter what the necessary ideology. Calverton should seek to spread pessimism; only when it is much more widely diffused than it is at present, even in a year of depression, will conditions be ripe for radical activity looking toward the world he wants: a world in which the many will not be sacrificed to preserving markets for investment bankers and dividends for the few.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

Building with Words

Stories of God. By Rainer Maria Rilke. Translated by M. D. Herter Norton and Nora Purtscher-Wydenbruck. W. W. Norton and Company. $2.

The Tale of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke. By Rainer Maria Rilke. Translated by M. D. Herter Norton. W. W. Norton and Company. $1.50.

ONE can imagine a man who had heard for years of Dante and then at last saw the "Inferno." His first impression would probably be one of surprise that so few and apparently such simple lines had brought forth so much commentary. It is a characteristic of the classics that they say incalculably more than they seem to say. There is a terrific inequality between their significance on paper and their significance in the world of the spirit. This is something that everybody knows. The reason must be that each word, however simple or ordinary it appears, has been placed in such a position that it can bear an unimagined stress; and so, with only a few lines, by a kind of engineering feat, a mighty edifice is built. At any rate, we are accustomed to think that this faculty has passed out of literature with the breakdown of the ancient simplicities. Our modern masterpieces, in general, are longer than the older ones. The word seems to have lost in tensile strength.

How wonderful, then, to read these "Stories of God"! The stamp of our century was as distinct upon Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) as upon Joyce or Proust or Franz Kafka. Yet once again, in these seeming nursery tales, so naive and so sly, which the hasty might mistake for a German equivalent of "Winnie the Pooh," the ancient miracle seems to take place. Almost every word could be understood by a child; quickly we find ourselves at the end of the little parables; and then we realize suddenly that we have been glancing at some of the deepest meanings in life. While we were being charmed by a faultless sensibility we did not observe that a structure, philosophical and theological, was being thrown up before our eyes. True, it was only a glance that we caught and the structure was only an outline, not a solid, buttressed cathedral. Yet one thing we know, that we have witnessed a literary marvel, if not a religious one.

"The Tale of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke," which is early in date, tells a ballad-story of the Turkish wars in the form of a delicate prose poem; in quality it is somewhat like the feudal pennon borne by the stripling cornet—an ancestor of the poet's—as he rode so quickly from his love to his death. Both books, though "slender," should increase Rilke's American renown, established two years ago by his prose masterpiece, "The Journal of My Other Self." "Stories of God" is not the weightiest work of the mysterious man who is already being granted a niche in the hall of German poets, but it is one of the finest works of our time. If it fails to appeal to the numerous enemies of "metaphysics," it must surely attract the few friends of literature. Those who do not perceive the little building it erects will at least admire the grace of the writing.

GERALD SYKES

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Land Booms and Crashes

The Great American Land Bubble. By A. M. Sakolski. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

FROM the time of the crown grants to companies before the American Revolution to the time of the collapse of Florida land values before the late stock-market crash, wild speculation in land has been a characteristic occupation of the American people. Professor A. M. Sakolski, by his painstaking research and interesting presentation of the material, has made an important contribution to a phase of the development of the country which has previously been hidden in local histories and obscure biographies.

The first great speculators in land were the early colonists, who received it from kings in whose names it had been discovered, and had the dangerous job of wresting it from the Indians by war or by craft. The early land deals, which were participated in by such leading men of the country as George Washington, Patrick Henry, Peter Jefferson, father of Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, were concerned with the vast unexplored lands which lay west of the established colonies. After the Revolutionary War destroyed the British king's right to assign land, speculation began in earnest. As Professor Sakolski points out, the new American States were free of corporations and joint-stock associations and had no securities with which to gamble except the questionable federal and colonial debts; but land was plentiful.

The new federal government was impoverished and the new State governments were equally so. They gave land in payment of their obligations, and in addition they gave land to their returned soldiers, with the result that trading in land became almost a necessity for those who needed money. Speculators bought up the soldiers' grants in great numbers, and with them as the basis started vast schemes. Fraud went hand in hand with wild speculation, as it has always done, and the following statement concerning the Oliver Phelps purchase near the present site of Charleston, West Virginia, sounds as if it were about the operations of the late Ivar Kreuger: "Speculation of a more crazy type cannot be found. The best of New England capitalists and business men placed hundreds of thousands of dollars in schemes they had never investigated and did not take the trouble to explore."

In the early years of the country's development land was not purchased as a sign of nobility or wealth but merely to resell at once to someone else at a profit; and, with the exception of the Wadsworths of Geneseo, the early landed proprietors speculated with their holdings instead of developing them. It is interesting to note, also, that almost the only landed proprietors who did not die bankrupt or go to debtors' prisons were those who, like the Wadsworths and the Astors, held land and leased it instead of trading in it. In order to sell their lands the owners wrote, or hired writers to write for them, glowing descriptions of the marvelous opportunities offered the trading public. Allowing for the difference in the publicity methods of the eighteenth century and the twentieth, the early travel books by British authors and the descriptive literature of Coral Gables are literary sisters under the calfskin, except that the travel writers frequently offered illuminating comment on morals and manners instead of concentrating on adjectives.

The federal government's decision to distribute the national domain in small allotments for settlement rather than in large grants for speculation caused the collapse of the early post-revolutionary land booms, and meanwhile speculation in commodities and securities had increased in the rapidly developing United States. But land speculation cropped up again in connection with the New York land areas, the Georgia "Yazoo"

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lands, and the Ohio lands. The selection of Washington, D. C., as the national capital was the occasion of great speculative ventures in real estate. The Louisiana Purchase, the Texas independence movement, and other Western developments were the signal for wild land-development schemes, insane trading, and extensive fraud. The panic of 1837 was the result, and land became then almost unsalable. Cautious investors with money, like John Jacob Astor, were able to take advantage of the distress and to profit enormously by forced sales. Professor Sakolski writes: "It took almost a decade for the country to recover from the shock of the 1837 collapse. In the intervening period, convalescence was slow, and land speculators were so much disheartened that it required a new generation to prepare the stage for another boom period."

The development of the railroads and of the new cities which sprang up around them was the occasion for renewed speculation on a large scale. Though land was the bait for the railroad capitalists and was handed out to them freely by the government which they influenced, it is significant that few of the original possessors of grants and plots got rich, for settlement followed more slowly, and they could not afford to wait. Professor Sakolski points out that it would have been difficult to raise capital for the vast railroad projects without land as the bait. The most flagrant and exaggerated land speculation in the history of the United States was the last one, the Florida real-estate boom, and Professor Sakolski's book contains an interesting account of how leading citizens from all parts of the country were deceived by these sentimental dreams of earthly glory with vast dividends.

In Professor Sakolski's book one can trace the ideas and policies of some of our statesmen back to their origin in these statesmen's investments in land. The book thus becomes a valuable contribution to the economic interpretation of American history, of which Dr. Charles A. Beard has been our leading exponent. In addition, it is a picture of America's wasteful enterprise and unique development, shocking to the mind of the engineer, fascinating to the individualist, and a source of moral indignation to the mind of the collectivist.

M. R. Werner

A Philosophical Novel

The Sleepwalkers. By Hermann Broch. Translated from the German by Willa and Edwin Muir. Little, Brown and Company. $3.

THIS extraordinary first novel, which has been highly praised by Thomas Mann, is composed of three parts: The Romantic (1888), The Anarchist (1903), The Realist (1918); each part is larger than the average novel and, in a sense, complete in itself, since it deals mostly with a different set of characters; the whole is doubtless designed to describe an epoch in all its strata. It is an epoch drifting toward chaos and culminating in chaos, and these states are reflected in the trilogy, not alone in the series of images which serve as symbols of the times but in the manner in which these images are presented. No ordinary coherence need be sought here; Herr Broch seems to work on the principle that the "disintegration of values" in life implies the disintegration of the novel too. Perhaps only Spenglerians will want to read every word of this book, though the lover of lyrical prose should find whole sections to his relish; the author is not only a fine stylist, but he is beautifully translated. Indeed, elements of greatness are not to be denied the work, but that it is great as an entity is doubtful.

The first book is the most orderly, the most free of the mystical and philosophical ballast which overweights the second and in particular the third. It is also up to a point the most derivative. Somewhat simpler than its model, it may be said to bear the same relation to Proust that Edith Wharton's earlier work bears to Henry James. The portraits of Passenow, Joachim, Bertrand, Ruzena, Elizabeth, are superb. Not only do you see them physically in the round, but you are enabled to see them spiritually with the same completeness by the author's portrayal of a series of psychological states, all culminating in great and little explosions of temperament.

The second book deals with the lower strata of German society, but the portraits are not less complete and have their own secret vitality; Martin Esch and Mother Hentjen are not soon to be forgotten. The author, it would seem, desires us to understand them as symbols; the reader will be content to accept them as comprehensible human beings.

The third book is concerned with the war and the effects of the war. Here again, Huguenau, realist, exponent of the "value system," is realized as a living individual and a type; with the others this product of bourgeois rationalism stands lost before the growing emptiness of the world, before that devastating loneliness which makes one think of death. Pages and pages of philosophy, some of it relevant and sound, intersect the narrative and hinder its natural flow. It is a pity that the author did not take a page out of Shaw's book and relegate the philosophical interludes to a preface, which might be skipped or read, according to the inclinations of the individual reader.

John Cournos

Shorter Notices

The Narrow Corner. By W. Somerset Maugham. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

After his raid on English literary society W. Somerset Maugham returns to his pirate's den in the East Indies. This latest novel is an old-fashioned melodrama glossed over by smooth craftsmanship that partially conceals its many defects. There is a necessary mystery in a young fugitive from Australia who goes slinking about the islands and turns pale at the end of every chapter. He has a brief love affair with the daughter of a planter, with the result that his friend, to whom the girl was engaged, kills himself. All this, as well as the activities of the minor characters, who are much more credible, is observed by Dr. Saunders, skeptical Englishman, who looks upon life to be amused by it. There is a lot of familiar hocus-pocus about old ruins, mysticism, and the inscrutable East. Maugham organizes this shoddy material in such a way as to get the maximum effect from it. He seems to go through his routine of tricks like a bored and expert magician, growing increasingly contemptuous of his audience at each performance.

The Pastures of Heaven. By John Steinbeck. Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $2.

Not really a novel, nor yet a book of short stories, this series of connected sketches presents a group of out-of-the-ordinary characters who live in the California valley called the Pastures of Heaven. It is the first flight of a fine writing talent which, while kindlier than that of Faulkner, is yet related to it in its preoccupation with the abnormal. Mr. Steinbeck presents an idiot, two moronic sisters, several chronic failures, and an unfeeling and essentially stupid son who, coming at the end of a line of distinguished men, destroys his father's will to carry on. There is no heartlessness or cruelty in Mr. Steinbeck's view of them; he rather forgives them all their trespasses in excellent analytical narratives, written in a supple prose. His future work should lead to his recognition as an excellent psychological analyst. If he could add social insight to his present equipment he would be a first-rate novelist.

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Before the Curtain Falls. Anonymous. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

American middle-class life of the past twenty years produced one pattern of experience which has figured so frequently in our literature that it has come to be accepted as representative. The intellectual who went to war under the influence of Wilsonian idealism—or for vague reasons which Wilson formulated into slogans—and who thereafter felt himself detached from society has been written about before. The anonymous author of this novel adds nothing to the picture that Dos Passos, Hemingway, Edmund Wilson, and others have drawn, but his story is of considerable interest. Descendant of distinguished Virginians, Henry Filmer drifted through all sorts of experiences without seeming to reach any definite conclusions about them. He studied codes for the Intelligence Department during the war, but far more emphasis is placed on his riotous living in Paris. While doing relief work in Russia in the early days of the Bolshevik rule, he seems to have seen very little, and the book at this point is far from convincing. Its newspaper-editorial style is particularly exasperating.

Blessed Spinoza. By Lewis Browne. The Macmillan Company. $4.

An adequate story of Spinoza must begin three or four centuries before the philosopher was born. It must begin with the scholastic philosophies—Hebrew, Christian, and Arabian—trace the influence of Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes, and end by realizing the meaning of Hegel's words: "Spinoza is the chief point of modern philosophy; either Spinozism or no philosophy." Mr. Browne's biography, from this standpoint, is inadequate. Thoroughly bare of any philosophic perspective, it narrates in a nice, readable style the mere facts of Spinoza's existence. Nothing is here of the inner flame that burned in him; only the ashes of his day-to-day doings. Fifteen scattered pages are all that Mr. Browne devotes to the philosophy of a man whose principal works are perhaps even more important in our age than they were the day they were written. Divorce the life of Spinoza from his works, and no 300-page biography is needed. It was Anatole France who epitomized it by writing: "If Napoleon had been as intelligent as Spinoza, he would have lived in an attic and written four books." If France erred in the number of books he accredited to Spinoza, he did no worse than Mr. Browne, who has also erred factually in several places, though he traveled to the Netherlands to uncover the only new word on Spinoza in his entire book: that the house in which Spinoza died was at one time, after the philosopher's death, a bordello!

The Making of Europe. By Christopher Dawson. The Macmillan Company. $3.75.

This is a history of Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire down to the end of the tenth century. Mr. Dawson believes that historians should emphasize the spiritual unity of Western Europe rather than its nationalistic differences. In this book he shows how this unity was gradually created by a fusion of Graeco-Roman culture, Christian religion, and Germanic vitality. He also devotes considerable attention to the Byzantine and Arabian empires. "The Making of Europe" is too strictly historical to serve the purpose which Mr. Dawson has in mind; he is content to state facts without suggesting implications. For the ordinary reader it is therefore less interesting than the same author's "Progress and Religion," in which he argued that a return to Catholicism was necessary if European civilization was to continue. On the other hand, this is probably the best short history of the Dark Ages that has appeared in English. Mr. Dawson writes with an impartiality very unusual in a Catholic historian, and appears to have studied all the available authorities. The book is too crowded with facts to be easy reading, but the style is admirable.

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Films

Gastronomy

ONE may wish there were more sting, more sarcasm, in Ernst Lubitsch's polished wit, but we must take the man as he is, and with all his limitations Lubitsch seems to be the only director in Hollywood who talks the language of adult people and whose suave and subtle humor betrays a keen if cynical mind. His cynicism has earned him the title of the acknowledged master of "sophisticated" comedy. Yet in the last analysis it is probably the least important element in his make-up as an artist. It shines only by contrast with the primitive earnestness of Main Street. Regarded by itself it suggests no more than the attitude of a good-natured gourmet who enjoys the oddities of the human scene. I have no quarrel with Lubitsch on this score. His intellectual mood has at least the grace of a certain refinement. I am more thrilled, however (if the word "thrilled" can be applied to the titillating sensation produced by his work), by the masterly skill with which he tells his after-dinner stories, the skill of a raconteur who makes his points without raising his voice.

"Trouble in Paradise" (Rivoli) is one of the gossamer creations of Lubitsch's narrative art. The story, it goes without saying, is a trivial anecdote which deals with some adventures of two society crooks. It is unnecessary to relate it in detail, and it would be impossible in this brief notice to describe the innumerable touches of wit and of narrative skill with which it is unfolded. The opening scene gives the key to the treatment of the story. It shows us a man collecting garbage whom we presently discover to be a Venetian garbage man carrying away his spoils in a gondola to the accompaniment of a raucous song. And so, throughout the picture, we see the adroit and impish Lubitsch turn his slightly crooked mirror now to one episode, now to another. It is all thoroughly delightful.

The difference between "Trouble in Paradise" and "The Kid from Spain" (Palace) is the difference between soufflé and spaghetti, but Eddie Cantor's spaghetti can be absorbed with considerable enjoyment, even when too filling and too highly seasoned. The picture, of course, is a star "vehicle." Those who, like myself, enjoy Mr. Cantor playing the part of an innocent will find plenty of broad comedy in his adventures in Mexico culminating in a hilarious bullfight.

Horror, like humor, can also be of two kinds. One hits you in the stomach, the other in the head. I cannot speak with certainty about the former variety, for clutching hands, screeching owls, or butlers made up to look like monsters never cause the slightest spasm in the lower part of my anatomy. But as films of this kind are made by the dozen, there must be enough people who enjoy abdominal horror. "Kongo" (Rialto) comes near to being this type of film, but its voodoo magic, with all its frenzy and human sacrifice, never stirred a hair on my head. On the other hand, in "The Most Dangerous Game" (Paramount) I sensed something like incipient horror, although the film had few of the usual trappings of its genre. In fact, its entire horror was contained in its Wellsian idea—the use of human beings as quarry in big-game hunting. No blood-curdling sensation was added to this by the actual hunt.

"The Conquerors" (Mayfair) is another attempt to picture the rise of modern America on an epic scale. Made by the same company that produced "Cimarron," the film follows the pattern of its predecessor without recapturing the latter's panoramic sweep or dramatic interest. I must also add that it is unbearably vulgar in its entire philosophy of the progress of America.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY

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Drama

Honest English Hearts

THERE are times when an American and an Englishman seem very much alike, when the commonplaces of Anglo-American dinner parties seem almost true. There are others when hands across the sea are far less convincing, and one of these times is when a really popular English play gets produced over here. The intelligentsia understand one another fairly well, but the intelligentsia do not count for very much after all, and when the People are concerned it is a different story. Your Englishman thinks of us as being crude, and perhaps we are; but the forgotten man in London seems endowed with provincial naivete which would bring a blush of shame to Main Street itself. I tremble lest some Englishman should hear of my awful cheek, but years of experience with the kind of play which England really takes to its heart have driven me to the conclusion that over there your average citizen is unsophisticated to an amazing degree. Straight sentiment, boarding-school farce, and Chatauqua technique suit him to a T. His wholesomeness knows no bounds, and what was good enough for his fathers is good enough for him. Faced with the same play, your average American is vaguely uncomfortable. He may not be any more profound, and he may be no less taken in by current clichés, but he does feel something uncomfortably old-fashioned about your genuine British hit. It reminds him too keenly of class day at the high school when he was a boy.

Consider for example "Autumn Crocus" (Morosco Theater) and "Chrysalis" (Martin Beck Theater)—two run-of-the-mill plays from opposite sides of the water. The former, from England, tries hard to be modern. It is all about a pathetic little school teacher who meets a handsome innkeeper in the Austrian Tyrol and has her moment of belated romance. There are even moments when it is Very Outspoken About Sex. Yet it all seems to have been written for the celibate vicar who appears incidentally. The sentiment is appallingly cute in a spinsterish way, and the comic relief which makes up a good part of the play is so simple-minded that one wonders if it can really have been written in this supposedly decadent age. One of the big moments comes when the heroine replies with an English folksong to one of the *Lieder* sung at a jolly little gathering in the parlor of the inn; but perhaps it is not necessary to go farther than to state that the characters, instead of being given names on the program, are whimsically described as "The Gentleman in the Gay Braces," "The Lady with the Lost Underclothes," and so on. Incidentally the latter lady's unwillingness to specify just which undergarments have been lost is supposed to be screaming, but despite the presence of a very handsome gentleman named Francis Lederer, and despite the fact that Patricia Collinge plays the school teacher exactly as I suppose it was intended to be played, I shall miss my guess if the piece repeats its English success. That is one of the reasons I sometimes doubt how much there is in all this talk about "a common language." Perhaps its only effect is to make us understand one another too well.

As for "Chrysalis," it also is not a first-rate play, though it is often an interesting one, and has its moments of real power. Supposed to show how the character of a debutante was deepened by her experiences when she became involved in an adventure with a budding gangster and his girl, its chief defect is a shallowness of characterization and feeling which leaves it a rather sketchy if sometimes exciting melodrama. Nevertheless, my intention was not to contrast an unusual American play with an unusual British one but to suggest how far apart two typical

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products of the two stages can be. And for that purpose "Chrysalis" will do admirably well. In the first place, though it is conventional, its conventions are not so thoroughly stale. The theme, general atmosphere, and technique may be ten years old, but they are not twenty-five. In the second place, it is ambitious; and that I take to be the most significant fact of all. The American playwright rushes in where Englishmen if not angels are these days afraid to tread. He is prone to deal with passions rather than sentiments, and with aspirations rather than regrets. Whether he succeeds or fails, he is striving for strength, and he is determined to deal with contemporary life in its most vigorous, even its most spectacular, aspects. The English dramatist, on the other hand, seems to have lost his nerve. He generally aspires to nothing above sentiment, elegy, common sense, and a minor fidelity to minor happenings. His comedy is whimsical rather than either boisterous or intellectual, his drama underemphasized and almost apologetic. Nor are these differences, I think, merely differences in style, for they probably correspond to some fundamental differences of spirit. The American still has faith in life as a possibly passionate and exciting thing. He still believes that extraordinary events can, do, and ought to happen. He still feels instinctively that the true meaning of life is to be found in such events. But the Englishman no longer really believes in passion and adventure. They make him feel self-conscious, and he is not quite up to them. Drama seems to him hardly possible at all, and when he does undertake to write it he turns to the few things in which he still believes—the minor adventures of a politely restrained aristocracy or of a quite resignedly commonplace middle class.

Incidentally it should be noted that in "Chrysalis" June Walker as the tenement girl contributes a sincerity which gives real life to her part, and that Osgood Perkins as a kindly if cynical uncle proves again what a splendid player he is.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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